

GENERAL PLAN



INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT
EIGHT JUNE 1967

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GENERAL PLAN

CITY OF EL CERRITO

ADOPTED: 19 FEBRUARY 1975

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL
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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

GENERAL PLAN
CITY OF EL CENTRO

INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
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The following table provides a detailed overview of the report's structure, including the page numbers for each section. The report is organized into five main parts: General Introduction, Literature Review, Research Design, Results and Discussion, and Conclusion. Each part contains several sub-sections that explore various aspects of the research topic. The report also includes a series of appendices, labeled A through Z, which provide additional information and data related to the study. The page numbers are listed on the left side of the table, and the corresponding section titles are listed on the right side.

I. GENERAL PLAN BACKGROUND

A. INTRODUCTION

In June 1956, the City of El Cerrito adopted a Master Land Use Plan and a Master Street and Highway Plan. Changed conditions and growth of the City necessitated major revisions in those Plans during the following decade, and in April 1967, a new document entitled the El Cerrito General Plan was adopted by the City Council. This was composed of three parts: Land Use, Circulation, and Community and Institutional Facilities.

Despite amendments to existing elements and addition of new ones, a major revision in the General Plan has become not only desirable but necessary. Not only do changes in the State Planning Law require the addition of new elements to General Plans but changes in people and in living styles, changes in the physical environment of the City and economic pressures have caused shifts and refinements in goals of residents which require re-examination of General Plan Goals. Finally, all elements of the General Plan must be examined to insure a functional and compatible relationship.

I-1

1. ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

The General Plan is a statement of goals and policies designed to provide a guide for the future physical development of the community. This is accomplished by: (1) providing a guide for zoning decisions which coordinate private development and help insure proper amenities and (2) posting sound planning concepts which serve to guide the Planning Commission and City Council in decision making.

In its focus a General Plan should be long-range, looking 15 to 20 years ahead; comprehensive concerning all phases of the physical environment and the forces which affect it; and general in dealing with broad aspects of development.

To maintain these characteristics, the General Plan must be held in the proper perspective. The General Plan is not a City Zoning Ordinance nor any other ordinance that regulates the land use but a guide for decisions as to how land will be used based upon present knowledge and goals.

Present California statutes require that a City's General Plan contain nine elements:

- Land Use - designating the general location and extent within the community of land for residential, commercial, and industrial use.
- Circulation - indicating major streets and highways, and other transportation routes and facilities necessary for the efficient movement of people and goods.
- Housing - stating the goals and plans for providing adequate housing and improving the housing stock.
- Conservation - providing for the conservation and development of the community's natural resources.
- Open Space - designating areas to be preserved in open space.
- Seismic Safety - identifying areas of seismic hazard.
- Safety - outlining a protection system from fires and geologic hazards.
- Noise - showing present and projected noise levels associated with existing and proposed transportation elements.
- Scenic Highways - providing for the development, establishment and protection of scenic highways.

I-2

2. GOALS

The procedure of preparing and adopting a General Plan naturally assumes that the governmental unit has certain aspirations, that it seeks to provide a certain quality of life for its present and future residents. In order that the policies and programs which make up the General Plan may be coordinated and directed toward meeting these aspirations, these are stated in the form of community goals. El Cerrito's General Community Goals are:

- Community Identity - to promote a sense of Community Identity in every way possible; to help give residents a feeling of belonging to a community and increase their participation in meeting their needs and those of their fellow citizens.
- City of Homes - to fulfill a role in providing quality, integrated residential housing in a wide price range and retaining this image of a City of Homes, consistent with the other goals.
- Variety in Housing - to continue providing a broad range of housing types and prices to accommodate the diversity of life styles of its residents.
- Stable Population - to preserve El Cerrito's stable population which has provided the community with people having sufficient time and interest to accept civic responsibility and to participate in community affairs.

Environmental Quality - to promote high levels of environmental quality with respect to air, water, sound and open space, and the sustenance of plant and animal life.

Transportation - to provide a balanced transportation system consistent with other goals of the community in order to serve the needs of all its residents.

The Economy - to maintain a viable economy through the promotion of quality commercial uses in El Cerrito which will encourage an attractive physical image as well as maintain the City's fiscal base.

Uses of Land - To encourage a pattern of development which is mutually compatible and enhances the physical form of the City.

Public Service - to maintain a high level of public services and facilities in order to preserve convenient and safe neighborhoods.

Regional Cooperation - to improve El Cerrito's high level of cooperation with neighboring cities and with regional agencies to provide a better regional environment.

I-3

3. THE PLANNING PROCESS

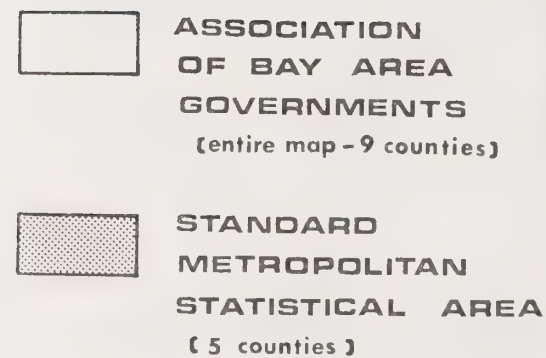
As pointed out in background reports prepared for this General Plan revision, the planning process is a continual process of input and decision making. The current revision is not a final product, nor could it be, given the nature of the planning process.

The first step in the preparation of this General Plan consisted of collection and analysis of current information on El Cerrito. This information is contained in two background reports, Residential Analysis of El Cerrito (October 1973) and Economic Study of El Cerrito (February 1974), and also in the new elements adopted for the General Plan, Open Space and Conservation and Seismic Safety. The contents of those documents are essential ingredients of the elements in this document and although this publication contains summaries of these reports, it is understood that the policies and programs contained herein incorporate the considerations brought out by these reports.

The Transportation Program, a report prepared by the El Cerrito Transportation Committee on needs and policies, has formed the basis for the Circulation and Scenic Highways Elements.

After adoption of any General Plan elements, the planning process continues as the ordinances and programs required to implement the elements are adopted. Adoption of these elements represents a benchmark in the planning process.

**FIGURE I-a:
THE BAY REGION
AND
METROPOLITAN AREA**



0 10 30 Mi.



B. COMMUNITY PROFILE

1. INTRODUCTION

The basic objective in planning is to obtain a more orderly, efficient, and human environment in the community and to achieve more harmony between the human activities in the City. People utilize the land; use facilities and services. Planning is, therefore, commonly concerned with people and the impact they have on their environment. It is thus important to understand the socio-economic characteristics of the community in order to understand the current trends and the possibilities or options for the future.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the broad trends in population and economic activities affecting El Cerrito in order that a more meaningful view of the present situation may be achieved. (More detailed descriptions are contained in the background reports, Residential Analysis and Economic Study.)

I-5

2. REGIONAL LOCATION

El Cerrito is part of the San Francisco Bay Region, an area consisting of some 7,000 square miles with a population approaching 5 million. El Cerrito is one of ninety cities in the San Francisco Bay urban complex and it is located in the East Bay area at the southern end of western Contra Costa County. The City of Richmond lies to the west (Figure I-a). The unincorporated community of Kensington is to the southeast, and the City of Albany (in Alameda County) lies to the south. As is made clear in the Residential Analysis and Economic Study, El Cerrito is economically and socially interdependent with much of the nine-county Bay region.

3. HISTORY

Before the Spanish exploration of the San Francisco Bay region, the land on this eastern shore of the bay was occupied by the Costanoan tribes of the Penutian family and remnants of their civilization were found in large mounds of dirt along the bay. The Spanish explorations began with the expedition of Don Gaspar de Portola in 1769 and in 1772 Father Juan Crespi halted at the base of a small hill on the bank of a creek opposite the Golden Gate -- the present site of the City of El Cerrito and the "little hill" from which it derives its name.

William F. Rust, a journeyman blacksmith from Hanover, Germany is designated as the founder of El Cerrito, coming into the area in 1883. In 1909 when a post office was established in William Rust's store, the little community grew and in 1917 the unincorporated areas of Stege Junction and Rust voted for incorporation and the City of El Cerrito had its beginning. During the war years the population skyrocketed to 16,624 and the community became best known for its casinos, poker parlors, and dog racing track. A citizens group formed the Good Government League in 1946 and adopted the slogan "The City of Homes" and set about to clean up the community. Residents demanded more than clean government - they insisted on a vigorous program of civic improvements and El Cerrito evolved into a prime residential community and is still "The City of Homes".

4. TRENDS IN POPULATION

Historically, total population in El Cerrito did not increase rapidly until after 1920 when migration to the Bay Area and intensive land development began to occur. (See Figure I-b). In 1950, the total population was 18,011. By 1960, the population of the City had grown to 25,437 and in 1970 was 25,190 (a 10-year net decline of 1 percent). This trend is dramatically different from the population growth within Contra Costa County over the past decade. From 1960 to 1970, the total county population grew from 409,030 to 558,389, an increase of 36 percent over 1960. This of course results from large land areas subdivided in the central part of the county in this period while in El Cerrito most vacant land for residential development was consumed by the mid-sixties and population growth stabilized.

FIGURE I-b: EL CERRITO POPULATION CHANGES, 1920-1970

YEAR	POPULATION	DECADE CHANGE	
		NUMBER	PERCENT
1920	1,800		
		+2,070	+ 11.5
1930	3,870		
		+2,267	+ 58.6
1940	6,137		
		+11,874	+193.4
1950	18,011		
		+7,426	+ 41.2
1960	25,437		
		- 247	- 0.97
1970	25,190		

Source: U. S. Census Series.

It is estimated that in the mid-sixties, population reached a peak and steadily declined as a result of several factors: the reduction in the birth rate, demolition activities at the BART station sites, families maturing, and vacant land for new development has declined. Because El Cerrito has reached an advanced stage of development, population growth is believed to have stabilized and future growth is not anticipated in any substantial amount.

5. TRENDS IN AGE GROUPS

The decade of the 1960's has been a period of relative stability in the overall population but at the same time, a period of instability for specific population groups. (See Appendix A-1 and A-2)

One of the interesting revelations is the considerable decline in the under-5 age group between 1960 and 1970 of 40 percent, while the age group 5-9 decreased by 28 percent. That part of the labor force age group (25-64) between 25 and 45 decreased by 1689, a -23 percent change indicating a possible outmigration of younger persons for employment opportunities elsewhere, while the retirement age group increased by 715 more people.

The decline in the 0-9 age group has resulted in a slight decrease in school enrollments which may continue for the next few years. This trend, however, is expected to stabilize by 1980. The median age of El Cerrito residents in 1960 was 33.5. While in 1970, the median age was 36.2. Again the maturing of City families is indicated, with the outmigration of those entering the young adult years. The retirement age group (65 and over) experienced growth between 1960 and 1970 in addition to having a much greater proportion of people in this age group than either the county or the state. It may not be correct, however, to characterize El Cerrito as having an aged population. The 9.7 percent of population 65 and over may be well above the 6.9 percent for Contra Costa County but is only barely above the 9.5 percent for the metropolitan area. The City's 31 percent of total population in the 45 to 64 age groups, on the other hand, is substantially higher than the 22 percent for the area or the 21 percent for the county. All of this indicates that El Cerrito is oriented toward families, but somewhat older families than other county areas.

The increase in the retirement age group in the City is consistent with the national trend in increased life expectancy of Americans. This will continue to place a greater responsibility upon local and federal governments to provide recreational, health, housing and other related services for the elderly.

6. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

El Cerrito's well-educated populace has been a prime asset, leading to a well-informed, involved citizenry. The median education level for persons twenty-five and older in El Cerrito between the years 1960 and 1970 rose from 12.5 years to 12.8 years. According to the Census, the median educational attainment for all persons in California was 12.1 in 1960, and 12.4 in 1970.

In 1970 more than 50% of all El Cerrito residents had some college education or vocational training beyond high school. Attainment levels are expected to continue to rise as people move into the 25 and older category.

7. INCOME

As noted in the previous section, nearly one third of the City's population is in the 45-64 age group. Two implications of this fact are that the City is more oriented to older families and also that a relatively high family income at least partially results from workers in their peak earning years. The median family income for El Cerrito in 1970 was \$13,358. This figure is approximately \$1500 above that for the metropolitan area median (\$11,812), and approximately \$900 above the Contra Costa County median of \$12,423.

8. REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

In 1970 employment within the 9-county Bay Region was 1,986,000.* Projections for employment in the year 2000 range from a low of 2,743,000 to a high of 3,230,000.* Projections of total population are commensurate with the projections of increase in employment. Employment increases for Alameda and Contra Costa counties are projected from 52 percent to 83 percent. In employed persons this means an increase from 613,000 in 1970 to a possible 934,000 to 1,120,000 in the year 2000.* Expanding employment is expected to occur in the fields of services; finance, insurance and real estate; trade; and some areas of manufacturing and government.++

The actual magnitude of growth of regional employment is less significant in the impact on the City than the fact that there will be growth. This is because employment within the City or planning area will not be greatly affected. The lack of space for major employment installations will mean that any new employers are likely to be

* ABAG/MTC Joint Land Use/Transportation Planning Program, Series 2 Projections, August 1973.

++ Economic Publications of ABAG, California Department of Human Resources Development, Wells Fargo Bank, United California Bank, Bank of America.

population-serving and of somewhat limited size. Likewise, there is no area for large subdivision or other residential developments. However, the fact that regional employment will continue to grow will mean sustained demand for residences in El Cerrito, so that the vacancy rate is expected to remain low, and the potential for sustained demand for the goods and services provided by local stores and shops may be high.

9. LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

In 1970 a total of 11,608 residents were employed of a total population of 25,190. The labor force participation rates for residents 16 years old and over are relatively high, 82% for males and 46% for females. At the same time, the unemployment rates are low: 4.0 for men and 5.4 for women.

By occupation, the largest percentage of El Cerrito's working force is engaged in professional and technical jobs (27 percent). This percentage is much higher than for the metropolitan area or the county (both 18 percent). (Appendix A-3) The City ratios are very close to the metropolitan average in managerial and administrative fields (just under 10 percent), clerical workers (23 percent), and foremen (12 percent). The City's ratio of sales workers (not quite 8 percent) is slightly less than the metropolitan area's, and the 9 percent operatives and 8 percent service workers are significantly below the 12 percent for each in the metropolitan area.

The industry accounting for the largest share of employment among residents is manufacturing (18 percent) followed by retail and education (each 14 percent). (Appendix A-4)

The place of work for City residents was computed for the Census by county and by city for the major cities in the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area. The greatest number of City residents work in Alameda County -- 47 percent. Of these, 16 percent work in the City of Oakland and 31 percent elsewhere in the County. (Appendix A-4)

The above information refers to the City's labor force regardless of place of employment. The total number of jobs in the City which employ non-residents as well as residents of the City, according to a study done by Contra Costa County, is approximately equal to one-third of the City's labor force; or 4,058 persons. Not surprisingly, the greatest number of local employees work in retail establishments; the second largest number are in service positions. (Appendix A-5)

National economic trends influence regional trends which in turn play a major role in establishing the limits and potential for development of the local economy. Commuting from residential communities to employment centers in the metropolitan area is a national phenomenon. This pattern is apparent in El Cerrito, their place of residence, to employment in other areas, namely in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties and San Francisco.

10. EL CERRITO'S ECONOMY

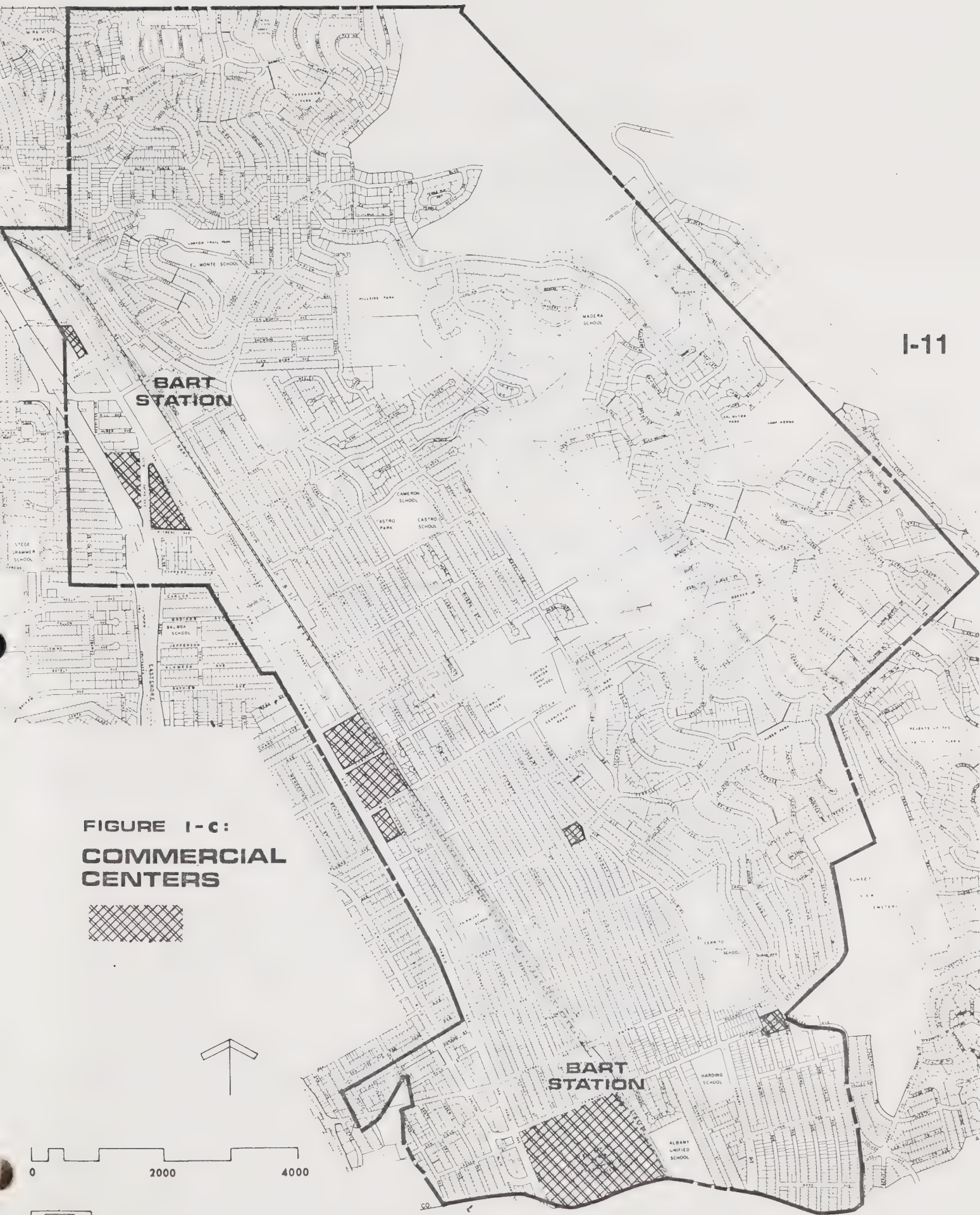
El Cerrito's Plaza Shopping Center, opened in 1958, is the greatest retail concentration within the City. Aside from this focus of commercial activity, El Cerrito has no center or downtown area since the City has developed as a residential community. Most of the other commercial outlets in the City are situated along San Pablo Avenue with some clustering in certain areas. (Figure I-c) Typical establishments are fast food outlets, a variety of retail and service uses. Unlike the Plaza Area, the Del Norte Area has no integrated shopping development in the area of the BART station. The neighborhood shopping areas located on Fairmount and Stockton Avenues contain 40,000 and 5,000 square feet respectively, of small retail convenience stores that are oriented toward neighborhood clientele.

11. SHOPPING PATTERNS

I-10

Residents of El Cerrito are quite loyal to City establishments, a fact elicited from the Consumers Survey as described in the Economic Study of El Cerrito. This fact attests to a sense of identity, a recognition that El Cerrito stores make up one part of the same community. Certainly it reflects the attraction of the stores, their merchandise and their personnel and quality of service, since loyalty normally does not transcend consumer knowledge and judgment. Beyond this it may, to a degree, reflect self-interest: most residents do realize that a portion of the sales tax is returned to the local government of the municipality wherein the sale was made, therefore, has a bearing on their own tax rate.

The types of goods for which area residents are most consistently attracted to City stores are groceries, hardware, and clothing, particularly women's.



**FIGURE I-C:
COMMERCIAL
CENTERS**



0 2000 4000



12. SALES RECEIPTS

Per capita retail sales are higher in El Cerrito than corresponding figures for Contra Costa County, the state and the Bay Area. (Appendix A-6 presents a comparison of per capita sales for the City and the state for 1964, 1970 and 1972 -- 1972 being the most recent figures available.) Data reveals that, compared to state averages, El Cerrito retail sales are particularly strong in apparel, general merchandising, and food. Thirty-eight percent of the 1972 sales are concentrated in the area of convenience goods.

The types of local retail outlets which have shown the greatest increases in taxable sales since 1974 are general merchandise, packaged liquor and home furnishings. Total number of outlets increased between 1964 and 1972, but the increase has taken place in outlets other than retail stores. This has undoubtedly been concentrated in the business and personal services categories, where taxable sales are incidental to the provision of services and consequently comparatively small.

I-12

13. ECONOMIC PROSPECTS

Although there has been a gradual increase in the number of housing units within the City and surrounding areas, which may continue if more units are built and if multi-family units replace older single-family or duplex units in the older sections of town, it must be clear that no great expansion of population is likely within the market area. Therefore, the business outlets must endeavor at the very least to retain their share of the present market, and hopefully to draw new customers from those areas which are showing large increases (mostly communities in northern eastbay), and most optimistically to enlarge their drawing area in surrounding cities. It must be recognized, however, that as land to the north becomes more urbanized, new service and retail outlets may move into or originate closer to the new population. Of great importance to El Cerrito is the anticipated construction of Richmond's Hilltop Shopping Center and/or the San Pablo Regional Shopping Center. Each of these Centers has been proposed as containing in excess of one million square feet of floor area. El Cerrito should strive to maintain and enhance the quality of service and merchandise to retain the loyalty of its local and subregional clientele.

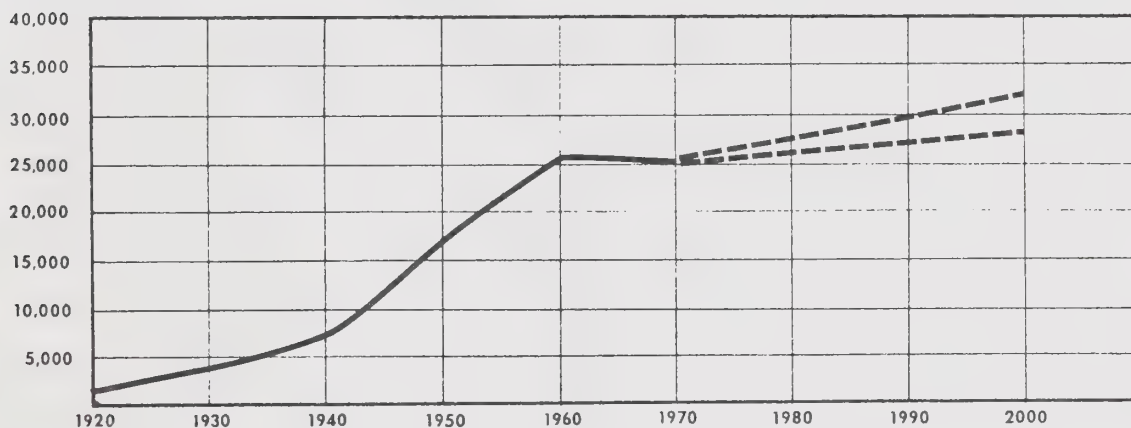
14. POPULATION FORECAST

The General Plan is based upon a reasonable forecast as to how many people, through the years, will have to be accommodated on the land and provided with necessary facilities and desired amenities. Pop-

ulation forecasts simply indicate what will occur if the assumptions and calculations are correct. The general assumptions for these projections are that the general economic, political and social organization of El Cerrito will remain stable throughout the planning period and that no economic depression or other disaster will occur. Since population projections for small area populations are difficult and population forecasts can vary from future reality, it is decided to base the Plan on a "design population" rather than a "forecasted population".

A design population of 30,000 residents was chosen for the General Plan because, by current forecasts, it will closely coincide with the 1990 forecasted population of the City. Figure I-d shows the two projections of El Cerrito's future population, one high and one low.

FIG. 1-d. POPULATION FORECAST — to 2000



I-13

Source: El Cerrito Planning Department Projections

While the design population is based upon the high forecast, the General Plan will not be invalidated if current estimates and assumptions prove incorrect. If growth is faster or slower than anticipated, this population will be reached in some year other than 1990. In such a case, the plan would be valid for the year in which the design population is achieved. It is, therefore, important to review the General Plan at regular intervals to assure its relevancy to the particular time period. The basic population assumption built into the General Plan, therefore, is that in a year reasonably close to 1990, there may be a maximum of 30,000 residents in El Cerrito. (Appendix A-7 compares El Cerrito's forecasted population with that of the county, Bay Area, state and national forecasts.)

II. CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES

A. SUMMARY: OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION

1. BACKGROUND

In recent years there has been a growing interest in conservation and in preserving natural resources for future use and enjoyment. As one expression of this concern, the California Legislature in 1970 required counties and cities to complete open space and conservation elements as part of their general plans. In 1972 a joint study was initiated by the cities of El Cerrito, Richmond and San Pablo and assisted by '701' federal planning grants. Its purpose was to prepare joint Seismic Safety, Conservation, and Open Space Elements for the three cities and to encourage intercity cooperation in environmental matters.

Seven technical reports were published in 1973 and give basic background material relating to the natural resources in the Tri-Cities Area: Geologic Hazards, Water Resources, Hydrology, Wildlife and Vegetation, Earth Resources, Recreational Resources, and A Plan for San Pablo and Wildcat Creeks. The reports have been compiled and published as the Environmental Analysis of the Tri-Cities Area. They can thus be used as references in evaluating future development proposals. Based upon these background reports, a joint Open Space and Conservation Element was prepared which had two essential features: recommended policies to guide future development in the Tri-Cities Area so as to protect the natural environment through intergovernmental cooperation; and recommended maps that apply these policies to the area.

II-1

In December 1973 the City Council adopted a revised edition of the combined Open Space and Conservation Element to meet the State Law requirements. The purpose of this section is to summarize the findings and policies contained within the Open Space and Conservation Element. Reference should be made to the separate complete document for more detailed analysis.

2. PURPOSE

Open space and natural resources are important to El Cerrito and reflect a variety of important values: ecological, educational, aesthetic, economic and recreational. These values are interwoven throughout the community in numerous ways so that the preservation of these resources is very important to the well being of the City. The Element, therefore, is designed to accomplish two major objectives:

- a. To identify and to protect the open space and natural resources of the Tri-Cities, with special emphasis on El Cerrito, for the benefit of present and future generations.
- b. To encourage urban growth in those areas where the natural characteristics of the land are most suited to such development, and to protect the public from risks to life and property.

To accomplish these objectives, the Element sets forth two types of policies. One type proposes specific physical changes, or prescribes management policies for a distinct physical area. These policies are designated on the open space map at the end of this chapter. The other type of policy applies to the entire area, and prescribes management techniques for new development, makes recommendations to other agencies, or suggests efforts to educate the public.

II-2

3. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

- a. GEOGRAPHY. El Cerrito is located north of the East Bay's earliest population settlement and current population concentrations. The western portion of the City is built on an extension of the San Francisco Bay Plain. The eastern half of the City extends into the Berkeley Hills, with the ridgetop lying near the eastern City Limits. Although these west-facing slopes are gentler than the east-facing slopes in Wildcat Canyon, El Cerrito contains some very steep areas.
- b. VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE. The scarcity of undeveloped land in the City has had a limiting effect on natural areas for both vegetation and wildlife. The Open Space and Conservation Element identifies a small patch of Goldfields, a wildflower usually found in the San Joaquin Valley, south of the Mira Vista Country Club. Such vegetation has value because it is unique to this area. The Element also pinpoints riparian woodlands within the City which should be retained in open space; some, but not all of these are contained within City parks.

Some forms of wildlife such as deer and raccoons can be found in the far eastern hills of the City, areas next to the large open areas of Wildcat Canyon. The natural habitat within the City itself is very limited. (For more information, consult the separate complete documents: Open Space and Conservation Element or the Environmental Analysis of Western Contra Costa County.)

- c. CLIMATE. The climate of the San Francisco Bay Region is a maritime climate, characterized by moderate summer and winter temperatures and by moderate rainfall, occurring mainly in the winter months. Within the Bay Region, however, the climate varies depending upon the physiography directly affecting the particular community. In the case of El Cerrito, the micro-climate which embraces the City as well as parts of the Kensington community, Richmond and Berkeley, is a result not only of the Pacific high air mass and the Pacific Ocean, (which affect the whole region), but of the position of this area opposite the Golden Gate wind gap.

This area is thus subject to the strong winds that blow through the Golden Gate and across the Bay, giving El Cerrito a more damp marine climate than other cities equally close to the ocean but in a different position with respect to air currents. Summer weather tends to be mild and rainfall is moderate. The incidence of fog is somewhat higher here than in other areas more protected from this wind gap since the fog rolls in from the ocean. At the same time, the sea breeze is beneficial in keeping down the air pollution level in the immediate area.

II-3

4. MAJOR ELEMENT PROPOSALS

The major proposals of the Open Space and Conservation Element can be divided into four categories:

- a. PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE AREAS. The Element designates all existing parks, marshes, and mudflats as open space, and recommends that the following areas be added to the open space designation:
- 1) The Belgum Valley and north-facing slope of Wildcat Canyon should be designated as open space because of their importance to the Wildcat Canyon Regional Park view, steep, unstable slopes, significant wildlife habitat, serious fire hazard, possibility of damaging soil erosion, and lack of access and other public utilities.
 - 2) The Stege Sanitary District Plant should be utilized for a public park when it is no longer needed for sewage treatment.
 - 3) Unique natural areas, important wildlife habitats, and areas suitable for nature study, particularly near schools, should be designated as open space.
- b. CONTROL AND PROTECTION OF CERTAIN LANDFORMS.
- 1) Ridges and Ridgelines. The Element recommends that development on ridges be controlled to protect the form of the

ridges, in particular by restricting development on ridge-lines.

- 2) Creeks and Streambanks. The Element identifies waterways worth preserving and recommends controls to preserve riparian vegetation, to protect owners and buyers of property from erosion and flooding, and to increase public access to the creeks.
 - 3) Slopes. As a soil conservation and flood prevention measure, the Element recommends that slopes exceeding 30 percent in steepness not be developed and that development on slopes of 15 to 30 percent be designed to control erosion and runoff.
 - 4) Vista Points and Major Features. The Element identifies scenic overlooks, Bay vista points, and major visual features, and recommends that they be preserved and that public access be provided to the vista points.
- c. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS. Many of the policies recommend that certain management techniques be followed to ensure that future development will not damage the environment. These policies can be divided into four categories:

- 1) Water Resources. The Element recommends that lower per capita use of water be encouraged; that priority for new development be given to areas already supplied water; that the groundwater supply be protected; that sufficient storm drainage capacity be available to carry runoff generated by new developments; and that a master drainage plan be completed for Wildcat and San Pablo Creeks.
- 2) Earth Resources. The Element recommends that an erosion control plan and revegetation plan be required as part of grading permits, and that mineral production be planned and carried out to avoid destruction or degradation of the environment.
- 3) Wildlife and Vegetation. The Element recommends that salt marshes, mudflats, stream vegetation, and other important wildlife habitats be preserved; that native plant species be used for landscaping; that unique plant communities be preserved; that fire hazard to new developments be reduced by fire-preventive landscaping techniques and by discouraging new construction on the north-facing slopes of Wildcat Canyon; and that agricultural use of the remaining area of prime farmland be encouraged.
- 4) Recreational and Cultural Resources. The Element recommends that the cities of West Contra Costa County participate jointly in determining standards for neighborhood, community, and regional parks; that public transportation be provided to the parks; that regional trails be provided; that archaeological sites be protected; and that the scenic features of the area be preserved.

- d. PUBLIC EDUCATION. The Citizens Committee was very concerned that the public be provided with more information about both the natural hazards and the natural resources in the Tri-Cities Area. The Open Space and Conservation Element will assist in meeting this goal by alerting both public agencies and the community to the valuable and sometimes unique land areas in the Tri-Cities Area. The Committee has also recommended that the cities inform their citizens of the available flood insurance programs; of the need to reduce water consumption; of possible erosion hazards along creekbanks; of methods that can be used to reduce fire risk; and of the regional parks in the area.

For greater details concerning findings and policies including the Action Program, the separate complete document Open Space and Conservation Element of the General Plan should be consulted.

It should also be noted that while El Cerrito endorses all the policies contained within the Open Space and Conservation Element, the City lacks authority to carry out many of the policies either because a state, regional, county or special purpose agency has the authority or because the land area referred to is outside the boundaries of the City of El Cerrito. The City of El Cerrito encourages all citizens to write or otherwise contact the responsible agencies and urge them to implement these policies.

OPEN SP.



VISTA POINT



CREEK



REGIONAL



RIDGE LINE

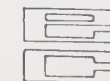
OPEN SPACE
OUTDOOR RECREATION
& NATURE



SCHOOLS,
PLAYGROUND
PLAYFIELDS



STEEP SLOPES



EL CERRITO
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

B. NOISE

1. COMMUNITY NOISE GOALS

Within the last decade noise has been recognized as an important community environmental concern. In response to this concern, it is El Cerrito's goal:

- to significantly reduce noise from existing sources
- to identify and mitigate new sources of noise

2. SOURCES OF NOISE IN EL CERRITO

- a. BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT (BART). Noise generated by BART is graphically illustrated on both the 1974 and projected 1995 Noise Contour Maps for El Cerrito. (see Appendix G) These contours developed by BART utilize a day/night averaging system which gives greater weight to noise occurring at night. The increase in noise between now and 1995 is anticipated as a result of the institution of direct Richmond to San Francisco trains and the establishment of nighttime service.

Based on the noise contour information from BART, noise contours will range from 75 decibels (L_{dn}) at 100 feet to 65 decibels (L_{dn}) 400 feet from the center of the track when BART is in full operation by 1995 (see Appendix G for technical description).

Increasingly accurate information about noise from BART and its impact on El Cerrito is presently being developed under the BART Impact Program sponsored by the U. S. Department of Transportation. A preliminary report (Environment Project Preliminary Findings - Sound, Doc. No. Tm 13-4-75), has established noise levels at the right-of-way for noise generated by BART trains for the entire length of the BART system. Knowledge of these fixed noise levels at the source, 50 feet from centerline of track, will be used by BART Impact Program Engineers to more accurately describe the noise effects in areas adjacent to BART. These studies are now under way and will provide an excellent basis for future BART noise reduction programs.

The BART District itself is also involved in a noise reduction program, which includes development of sound barrier construction techniques. A test section is scheduled for construction in Walnut Creek during fiscal

year 1975-1976. (See BART: Sound Reduction Program Report, February 1975)

Regardless of future success at noise reduction, planning for future land uses adjacent to BART must recognize: (1) that in residential areas, noise from BART may generally always be greater than the ambient noise, and (2) that new residential/ or other noise-sensitive uses along BART must be carefully monitored.

- b. SAN PABLO AVENUE. San Pablo Avenue is probably the most significant single noise generating source in El Cerrito. Vehicles on the Avenue will generate noise levels up to 65 decibels 400 feet on either side of it and 70 decibels 200 feet on either side by the year 1990. (see Noise Contour Maps in Appendix G)

The existing commercial use of land along San Pablo Avenue is more compatible with the high traffic noise than other possible uses, reducing somewhat the direct impact of noise on the Avenue.

As there are increases in residential uses planned for on or near the Avenue, particularly in the area between the BART right-of-way and the Avenue, more specific noise information would be required to be related to specific construction and insulation requirements.

Other uses which may be affected by high noise levels on the Avenue are: offices, professional buildings, schools and other public assembly buildings.

- c. FREEWAY 80. Freeway 80 at the present time has a direct noise impact on El Cerrito only at the north San Pablo Avenue, Cutting and Potrero triangle area. In most of this area, the freeway and San Pablo Avenue are just 450 feet apart. Present noise levels there exceed 70 decibels (L₁₀). BART also contributes to the high noise levels in this area, but noise from BART is less than that generated by San Pablo Avenue and Freeway 80. (see Noise Contour Maps, in Appendix G)
- d. AT & SF RAILROAD. Railroad operations through El Cerrito are limited to two trains daily, generally one in the morning and one in the late evening. While each single passage of a train generates about 75 decibels (CNEL) at 50 feet from the centerline of the track, overall railroad noise is subordinate to noise generated by BART on the right-of-way above the railroad.

There has been a history of negotiations between AT & SF Railroad and the adjoining cities of Berkeley and Albany over possible abandonment of this rail right-of-way. If such abandonment should take place, the railroad would be effectively eliminated as a source of noise in El Cerrito, (see Circulation Element, page III-13).

- e. OTHER NOISE SOURCES. Other individual sources of noise that create specific problems could be regulated through a specific ordinance dealing with community noise control. Other cities have established noise monitoring and enforcement programs for these troublesome noise sources, but costs for such programs are generally prohibitive.

One continuing problem source of noise is electronically amplified sound. Interior and exterior sound systems for local schools and other private and public recreational uses create disturbances in residential areas which could be reduced by proper controls on the use of such equipment. Other examples of noise sources are playgrounds, public and private.

The El Cerrito City Code presently has a brief section (Section 4304) which addresses noise on a general level. This regulation of "unnecessary noises" can apply to many of the troublesome miscellaneous noises occurring throughout the community, but it is not easily enforced due to its very general nature.

II-3

3. NOISE SENSITIVE LAND USES

Uses most sensitive to external noise sources are: schools and libraries, hospitals and convalescent homes, churches and outdoor recreation areas. Other sensitive uses are residential and public facilities located near transportation links such as BART, San Pablo Avenue or the Freeway.

Existing noise sensitive uses now located in noise impacted areas are: 1. Fairmont School, 2. El Cerrito Library, 3. El Cerrito City Offices, 4. Carlson Convalescent Home, 5. St. John's School, 6. Harding School.

The land use element of this plan has recognized and given special consideration to encouraging location of senior citizen housing in El Cerrito. Recognition should be given also to the noise sensitive nature of this type of housing. While sites convenient to facilities are most desirable, noise levels in such areas are generally high.

4. NOISE INSULATION STANDARDS FOR BUILDINGS

The State of California has recently adopted noise standards which govern noise insulation between the building interior and exterior, for residential buildings located near freeways, major streets, railroad or rapid transit lines.

The Uniform Building Code, which is a nationally recognized code and had been adopted by city ordinance, regulates "sound transmission" between units or guest rooms and/or adjoining interior hallways in residential structures.

5. NOISE POLICIES

There are policy directions related to the general goal of limiting new sources of noise and reducing existing fixed sources of noise.

- a. Continue to work with BART on noise reduction programs, placing special emphasis on noise reduction adjacent to noise sensitive uses. (i.e., public library, Fairmont School, Civic Center and residences within 200 feet of BART row).
- b. Encourage abandonment of the AT & SF Railroad right-of-way.
- c. Consider adoption of a Community Noise Ordinance to effectively regulate community noise sources including sources of amplified noise.
- d. Establish city operational policies and communications to demonstrate city concern for community quiet.
- e. Continue review of all legislation and related Federal, State and local standards regarding noise.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- a. When making amendments to the zoning ordinance, give special consideration to noise sensitive land uses.
- b. Develop a specific plan for future public utilization of the AT & SF Railroad right-of-way. (Plans should be developed before abandonment or other action takes place regarding the right-of-way.)
- c. Incorporate the most current methods of noise reduction technology in capital improvements, purchases of new City equipment, and general city operations.
- d. Develop procedures for enforcement of standards required by State and Federal legislation.

III. TRANSPORTATION

A. CIRCULATION

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the Circulation Element is to establish a Transportation Planning Program that provides for effective planning and management of an efficient circulation system in El Cerrito. Effective planning and management of a circulation system should not only provide for efficient movement of goods and persons within the City, but also must focus upon the safety of its residents and consider the future circulation needs of the City.

The three basic modes of transportation utilized in El Cerrito are the automobile, bus and BART. Of these, transportation by automobile still predominates in the City. Consequently, transportation planning in the past has been oriented toward an adequate street and roadway system. However, because the roadway system in El Cerrito is fairly well established, and because many residents have no access to automobiles (for any number of reasons), current transportation planning as reflected in the Circulation Element is directed toward bus and alternate modes of transportation.

III-1

2. BACKGROUND

A city Transportation Committee consisting of three citizens together with a City Councilman and a member of the City Staff appointed by the Mayor was created in December 1972, by City Council Resolution, to study the overall transportation needs of the City and to recommend to the City Council a Transportation Program and a plan for its implementation. The Committee studied the various modes of transportation in relationship to the needs of various segments of the population, together with economic and other constraints and in April 1974, produced a Background Report for the Circulation Element entitled City of El Cerrito Transportation Program. This report contains background information and specific recommendations regarding transportation needs and problems in the City. The information contained in the Transportation Program Report is the basis for the Circulation Element.

3. POLICIES

The following seven policies were adopted by the Planning Commission

and City Council as a framework by which pedestrian, vehicular, transit and other movement systems can be integrated and an attempt to achieve the development of a circulation system that will best serve the transport needs of the community:

- a. Public transportation such as that provided by A-C Transit should be increased, both in level and diversity of service.
- b. Arterial circulation be improved with specific attention to BART station areas and San Pablo Avenue.
- c. Regional access be improved with specific attention to the Cutting Interchange area.
- d. Parking service and accessibility be improved, particularly in vicinity of the BART station areas and San Pablo Avenue.
- e. Alternative modes of transit to the private automobile and bus service, such as pedestrianways, bikeways, dial-a-ride or dial-a-cab service be encouraged.
- f. Scenic routes be recognized, including the potential of San Pablo Avenue and the AT & SF right-of-way.
- g. Noise associated with BART and heavy arterial traffic is a consideration and should be given special study.

4. LOCAL STREET AND HIGHWAY SYSTEM

El Cerrito's proposed street and highway system shown in Figure III-a recognizes a hierarchy of street facilities beginning with the largest principal arterial facility to the smallest local street facility. For the purpose of this element, the following classifications are used in discussing the street network. This classification system is based upon the National Highway Functional Classification System.*

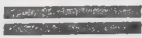
- a. Principal Arterial (Urban Type IV). The predominant functional purpose of Type IV Arterials is to provide important inter-urban traffic service to major population centers and commercial areas. These facilities provide the highest level of conventional street service to virtually all area traffic generators accommodating the travel volume at good levels of service and relatively high speed. The primary Type IV arterial in El Cerrito is San Pablo Avenue.
- b. Minor Arterials. Minor arterials inter-connect and augment the higher order arterial systems. These provide service to trips of moderate length at a somewhat lower level of travel mobility than the higher order arterials and generally do not

* The National Highway Functional Classification System was developed to determine a uniform classification system for highways and streets throughout the United States.

FIGURE III-a

STREET & HIGHWAY SYSTEM



-  HIGHWAY
-  INTERCHANGE
-  PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL
-  MINOR ARTERIAL
-  COLLECTOR
-  LOCAL

SPECIAL PRIORITY STREET AND HIGHWAY PROJECTS INDICATED BY NUMBERED TEXT FOR DESCRIPTION



penetrate identifiable neighborhoods. Arlington Avenue and Richmond Street are examples of minor arterials.

- c. Collectors. Collector streets link local streets with the arterial system. Ideally such streets are located near points equidistant from the surrounding arterial system. An example of a collector street is Manila Avenue.
- d. Locals. Local streets provide access to and from local areas and are not designed for through traffic.

A street network planning program attempts to link local, collector, arterial and highway systems together in such a manner that a balanced system results. The basis of the street and highway system is the 1967 Street and Highway Plan which recognizes a well established and stable street system and looked to a design population of 45,000 residents, (whereas the design population under the current plan is 30,000). The street and roadway network within the City has not been overburdened and, with careful planning and design, the system will have no trouble accommodating the City's future street and roadway demands. Any new developments must be located with adequate concern for traffic. The proposed Street and Highway System, for all practical purposes, represents an expansion and refinement of the 1967 General Plan. It indicates both certain needed revisions and areas of continued concern.

III-5

5. AREAS OF CONCERN

There are a number of areas of concern as well as street projects for the proposed Street and Highway System. Among a number of smaller concerns and projects, five are considered major and deserve special attention in the Circulation Element. These concerns and projects are located by number in Figure III-a and are described below:

1. CUTTING-HILL-SAN PABLO AVENUE-INTERSTATE 80.

The 1967 Circulation Element shows a double-street interchange for Cutting Boulevard and Hill Street to Interstate 80 in order to provide adequate access to the El Cerrito Del Norte BART station, as well as access for the general citizenry in El Cerrito. Because of substantial cutbacks in construction funds by the State, the State Department of Transportation has stated that there would be no freeway widening on Interstate 80 for the next 20 years. However, some Interstate funds have been made available under "Aid to Transit" for the construction of a first stage plan toward the eventual construction of the interchange. Included in the first stage plan are street improvements on San Pablo Avenue, Hill Street west of San Pablo Avenue, Cutting Boulevard, Eastshore Boulevard, as well as Interstate 80. Not only are funds not available for the full interchange now, but the current traffic volumes and the immediate future projections do not justify a full interchange at this time. It will be necessary, however, to plan for the ultimate interchange concept and the ultimate extent of the improvements for better access between Interstate 80, San Pablo Avenue and the Del Norte BART station.

2. SAN PABLO AVENUE. A separate document which was approved along with the 1967 General Plan Revision was a concept plan for the improvement of San Pablo Avenue. A number of improvement projects and widenings by the City, by BART, and more significantly, by private developers have conformed to the concept plan; however, such progress is very slow. It should be noted that San Pablo Avenue from the South City Limits to Cutting Boulevard is still on the State Highway system, as State Route No. 123. The portion of San Pablo Avenue north of Cutting is a city street. The Design Review Board and Planning Commission have recommended that prior to any construction of medians along San Pablo Avenue, an Urban Design Plan be prepared for the entire length of San Pablo Avenue, both for the State portion as well as the City portion. The joint effort of a consultant and the City is underway to produce such an Urban Design Plan.

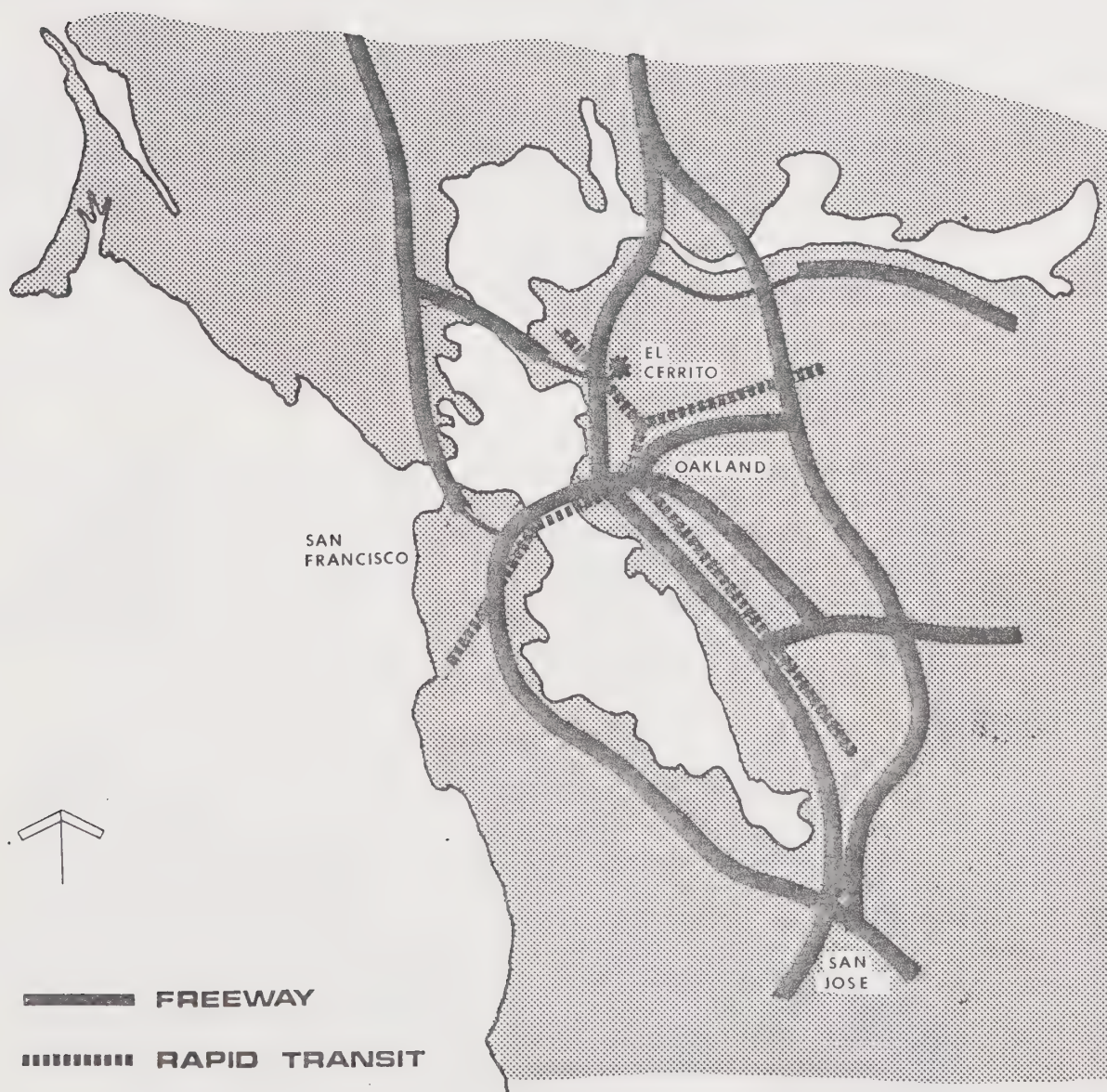
Funding for the ultimate improvement of San Pablo Avenue has always been a problem; however, with the availability of the Federal Aid Urban funds, such a project is now more feasible. Much of San Pablo Avenue is presently in need of major repair work or rebuilding not only because of the structural deficiencies in the pavement but because of the high crown which exists.

3. CENTRAL-FAIRMOUNT AVENUES. The 1967 Circulation Element shows Central Avenue and Fairmount Avenue between San Pablo Avenue and the El Cerrito Plaza BART station as a one-way couplet. The one-way concept was originally proposed for this area for two reasons; first, Central provides the access to the freeway and Fairmount is the major access to the El Cerrito Plaza, and secondly, the street widening and right-of-way acquisition costs in order to provide for a two-way system would exceed the benefit from having an expanded two-way system on both streets. It is recommended that, because of the two reasons mentioned above, it remain a one-way couplet on the plan until a separate study by the City is made for this area. It should be noted that the Underground Utility Advisory Committee, which establishes priorities for the use of PG&E Rule 20-A allocation funds for undergrounding of utilities, has recommended that these two streets receive top priority for utility undergrounding funds.
4. FAIRMOUNT EXTENSION. The Circulation Element of the 1967 General Plan shows a proposed roadway between Arlington Avenue in Kensington and Colusa Avenue in El Cerrito, between Sunset View Cemetery on the north and East Bay Water Filter Plant on the south. This project is commonly known as the Fairmount Extension. This roadway would provide direct access to BART, to the El Cerrito Plaza and to the freeway for residents in the Kensington, Berkeley and southeast El Cerrito area. It is recommended that this route remain on the Circulation Element.
5. MOESER LANE EXTENSION WEST. The 1967 Circulation Element includes the western extension of Moeser Lane between San Pablo Avenue and Carlson Boulevard. This roadway would provide more direct access between El Cerrito and Richmond, as well as additional and much needed access to Interstate 80 via Carlson Boulevard. It is recommended that this roadway remain on the Circulation Element.

As another area of concern, it is specifically noted that streets in areas allowing higher density residential land use will have to be widened to meet current standards in order to handle the increased traffic. The area just south of the Del Norte BART station will require additional right-of-way; the preferred solution here would be a re-alignment of existing north-south streets.

FIGURE III-b

INTER-URBAN LINKAGES



III-7

Source: El Cerrito Planning Department, 1974

6. INTER-URBAN LINKAGES

Figure III-b schematically illustrates the system of inter-urban linkages relative to El Cerrito. On the local level, arterials such as Cutting Boulevard, Arlington Avenue and San Pablo Avenue serve as inter-urban linkages between adjacent cities while the Eastshore Freeway is the major carrier of traffic through the northern East Bay area and connecting with the regional freeway system.

The San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge connects with the Eastshore Freeway, providing access to San Francisco, a total distance of some 16 miles from El Cerrito. The Richmond-San Rafael Bridge provides the closest bay crossing, just 5 miles west of the City connecting Contra Costa with Marin County.

The Bay Area Rapid Transit's Fremont-Richmond line has two stations within El Cerrito: the Plaza and Del Norte stations. These link El Cerrito residents directly with Oakland, Hayward and other southern East Bay communities, and by transfer in Oakland, El Cerritans are able to travel to Walnut Creek and as far east as Concord in Contra Costa County. The BART line to San Francisco is now open and residents can also transfer in Oakland to that line. (In early 1975 that line will be direct.)

7. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In El Cerrito two modes of public transport are available to residents; the fixed rail system of BART and the buses of A-C Transit. While BART plays a role in the movement of people to and from El Cerrito, it would not appear to be a mode used for intra-city movement and is considered in this element only to the extent that access to and from the BART station should be planned for within the overall bus network for the City. Two forms of bus service are considered: (1) fixed route, (2) demand-response (dial-a-ride).

Fixed Bus Routes. The Transportation Program Report concluded that while no major changes in bus routes will be required, there are certain recommendations for minor rerouting to improve existing service. These recommendations including alternatives are contained in the separate document, The Transportation Program, and are intended to improve the east-west movement, provide better access to the Community Center and to BART, and to provide more frequent service to a larger area of the City. As a part of this improved service, it is strongly recommended that the schedules of the buses which discontinue operation at about 6:00 P.M. be extended to later times to accommodate BART patrons. With the operation of BART's transbay service, emphasis should be placed on feeder service to BART.

Demand Response Service (Dial-A-Ride). A-C Transit has initiated a Dial-A-Ride experiment in a four-square mile area of Richmond and anticipates expanding in a planned time sequence to eventually include El Cerrito. In this operation, regular buses which have been shortened are used. Because of the population density of El Cerrito and the terrain problem noted earlier, it would appear that this Dial-A-Ride system has the potential to provide the necessary East-West service in the off-peak hours during the day since it would be able to negotiate the hills more easily and should provide the necessary means to look after the "after 6:00 pm" transport needs of the City in the same general direction.

In spite of the fact that experience with Dial-A-Ride in other areas indicates that only about one-half the cost of operation can be recovered from the fare box, Dial-A-Ride has the potential to provide a needed service to a segment of the community now not well served by fixed route service and over a greater time span than can be accommodated economically by such service. This type of service should provide a necessary form of transport for the elderly. Early extension of this service to the City of El Cerrito should be encouraged.

III-9

Bus Benches and Shelters. As part of the plan to improve bus service, bus stops should be made as comfortable and convenient as possible. The City Council has provided for bus benches at stops along San Pablo Avenue and A-C Transit is installing a limited number of bus shelters at the most utilized bus stops on San Pablo Avenue.

The San Pablo Avenue Urban Design Plan, scheduled for completion in the summer of 1975, includes designs for bus benches and shelters. After adoption of this plan, these designs should be installed where practicable. As the new design is installed along the Avenue, the present benches can be moved for use in other locations in the City.

8. BIKEWAYS

This section of the Circulation Element is concerned with the possible creation of bike lanes and the encouragement of bicycling as a mode of transportation in El Cerrito. Due to the hilly terrain and commuting statistics, it is presumed that any bike lanes established will necessarily be oriented in the north-south and be more weekend recreational traffic than transportation to and from place of employment. While potential biking areas are the relatively flat sections of the City and along Arlington Boulevard in the hill area, further study must also be made to determine the feasibility of establishing bike lanes in other areas. Further study must also be made to determine the feasibility of bike lanes and routes in relation to their impact upon residential parking and traffic patterns of motor

vehicles, to bike rider safety, and maintenance costs such as signing, storm drain grate modification, and striping for such bike lanes. Although there is an interest in bikeways, the City should proceed cautiously because of the unanswered questions regarding such items as liability, municipal costs and safety. It is recommended that the City consider establishing bikeways in selected areas as an experiment, subject to study and evaluation. If it is determined that bicycle user volumes justify the expenditure of public monies, the program should be retained or expanded.

9. PARKING

At the present time, there does not appear to be any major problem with parking in the City; however, there do exist several areas of concern with respect to future planning.

One of the more important concerns is at and around El Cerrito's two BART stations. When BART becomes fully operational, increased parking needs may force parking onto streets adjacent to parking lots, particularly if parking fees are imposed at the station parking lots. The City is committed to prohibiting parking along the north side of Hill Street but has not imposed it yet as the problem has not reached the proportion to require such prohibition. The use of residential streets for BART parking will present a problem for residents in the area as well as increase congestion on these streets. A joint study between El Cerrito and BART should be made to assess the adequacy and future needs of BART station parking.

Another area of concern is the commercial areas near Fairmount Avenue. Many commercial uses built prior to the current off-street parking regulations lack provisions for off-street parking thereby creating congested on-street parking. The replacement of non-conforming uses (without a public redevelopment process) with new uses is slow. There may be a need to provide shared off-street parking through a Parking District procedure.

With respect to other parking concerns, consideration should be given to a study of the need for municipal parking lots both for public and quasi-public uses; for instance, additional parking may become necessary in the future around the Community Center, Swim Center, Contra Costa Civic Theatre and Portola Junior High School area; the present set of uniform parking standards for determining the number of parking spaces in commercial areas should be re-evaluated to reflect the types of parking demand created by different land uses thus necessitating the revisions of the present off-street parking ordinance; and with the shortage of funds for construction of street widening projects, consideration may have to be given for parking restrictions in lieu of street widenings, particularly in the higher density residential areas.

10. PEDESTRIAN WAYS

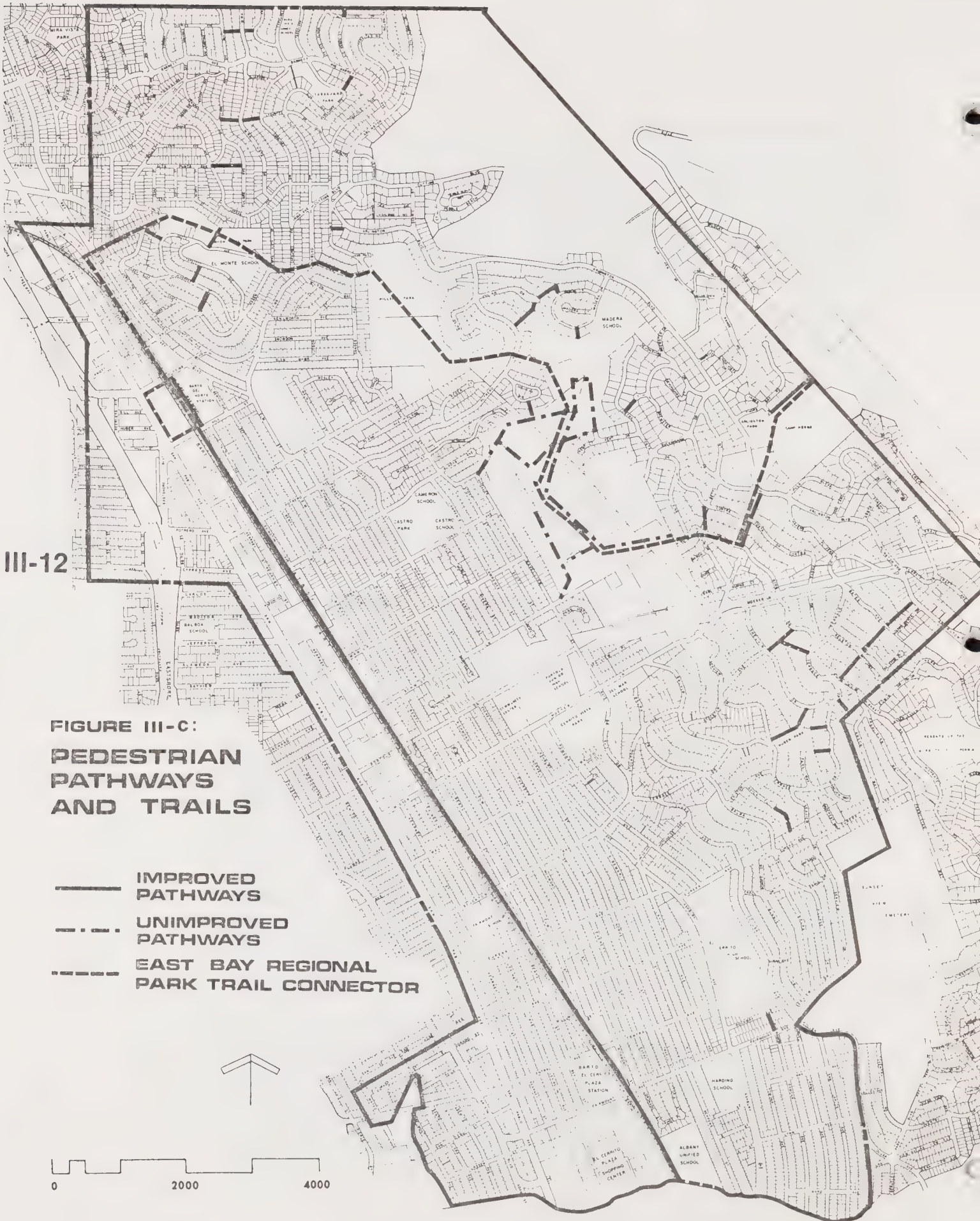
There are numerous hiking trails and dedicated public paths in El Cerrito, of which only some are improved. These are shown on Figure III-c. The BART Linear Park provides a multi-use facility for hiking and bicycle riding from one end of the City to the other. Crossing protection and warning features were installed at the various street crossings of the Linear Park.

Subsequent to the acquisition of additional property for the Hillside park natural area, the Forrest Brown Trail System through Hillside Park was established, and is supplemented by the various fire trails which exist in Hillside Park. In addition to this trail system is a proposed project for a 3.3 mile hiking trail which would begin at the BART Del Norte station, go through the Canyon Trail Park into Hillside Park and then into Wildcat Canyon via Camp Herms Scout Camp. This trail would involve the use of some City streets and would include the improvement of certain existing trails along with the acquisition of some easements, or rights-of-way, necessary to make the trail continuous.

III-11

In 1965, by Resolution No. 2859, a priority was established for the improvement of paths, with the highest priority going to paths which lead to the bus route system and to parks and other community activities. Of the 37 separate pathways, only 14 are improved. Nine of the 14 have been improved since 1965. The unavailability of funding for the improvements has slowed the program and only recently have limited funds been provided for path improvements. The City should seek ways to improve such public pathways.

Concern has been expressed many times regarding pedestrian crossing at numerous locations on Fairmount Avenue between the Plaza BART station and the Plaza Shopping Center. The possibility of constructing a pedestrian overcrossing between the station upper platform and the Plaza parking lot should be explored to improve safe circulation between the two facilities. It should be recognized that such a project would necessitate the installation of a separate fair collection and ticketing facility south of Fairmount.



**EL CERRITO
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

12. FUNDING SOURCES

The following is a description of the major funding sources for capital improvements. The City should pursue these and other miscellaneous and specialized sources to develop a funding program for the recommendations contained within these Elements.

GENERAL FUND. The City could, through its annual capital improvements program, fund local transportation improvements. Included in the fund are monies from the property tax, state sales tax, and from the federal revenue sharing program. Priorities for all expenditures are determined yearly.

BONDS. Bonds can be a major source of securing the Santa Fe right-of-way for inclusion in the El Cerrito Linear Park system (as recommended in the Open Space and Conservation Element), if and when the right-of-way becomes available. These monies can also be used for the construction of improvements on such property.

III-14

If the City determines that community redevelopment is feasible in El Cerrito, and should any selected project areas include a program for street improvements or municipal parking lots, tax increment financing can be utilized as a funding source for bonds.

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT. Special Assessment Districts can be a financing tool which can be utilized to construct a wide range of capital improvement such as street lighting, street construction or parking facilities. Under this method of funding, the design and construction costs are distributed among the benefiting property owners in the assessment district. This method of financing has been used previously in the City for street lighting and street improvements with good results.

CALIFORNIA GAS TAX FUNDS. These funds can be applied to the design, improvement, construction and maintenance of streets and other vehicle-related facilities. However, these funds are segregated into various categories which limit their expenditure. The distribution of these funds is based upon a per capita and vehicle registration basis.

FEDERAL AID URBAN FUNDS. These funds provided for under the 1973 Federal Highway Act may be utilized for improvements of routes on the Federal Aid Urban System. These routes are high volume carriers of regional significance. The streets in El Cerrito which are on the Federal Aid Urban System are San Pablo Avenue, Carlson Boulevard, and a portion of Cutting Boulevard and Hill Street west of San Pablo Ave. These funds are allocated to the State-County for distribution. In Contra Costa County these funds are distributed on a priority basis but must include consideration for mass transit.

B. SCENIC ROUTES

1. INTRODUCTION

State Law requires the General Plan to include a Scenic Highways Element for establishing, protecting and developing scenic highways. The establishment of a scenic highway enables the local jurisdiction to take steps in protecting the scenic assets of the area in which the highway passes. These actions may include sign regulations, control of urban design, regulation of land use or site detail planning.

In undertaking the development of official scenic highways, the following should be considered: "The concept of the 'complete highway' which is a highway which incorporates not only safety, utility, and economy but also beauty." Although the emphasis of the Scenic Highways Element is on the designation of state highway routes as "scenic" routes, this does not preclude local agencies from developing and adopting local scenic routes.

III-15

In assessing local scenic routes, it is the City's policy:

- To encourage establishing attractive and efficient inter-urban links.
- To conserve, enhance and protect scenic views observable from scenic routes.
- To enhance the attractiveness and visual qualities of scenic routes in El Cerrito.

A scenic route or scenic highway in El Cerrito may be generally defined as a street or roadway which has visual significance and contains potential for improving the aesthetic appearance of the community as well as traverses an area containing scenic value or provides significant views to areas of scenic value.

12. FUNDING SOURCES

The following is a description of the major funding sources for capital improvements. The City should pursue these and other miscellaneous and specialized sources to develop a funding program for the recommendations contained within these Elements.

GENERAL FUND. The City could, through its annual capital improvements program, fund local transportation improvements. Included in the fund are monies from the property tax, state sales tax, and from the federal revenue sharing program. Priorities for all expenditures are determined yearly.

BONDS. Bonds can be a major source of securing the Santa Fe right-of-way for inclusion in the El Cerrito Linear Park system (as recommended in the Open Space and Conservation Element), if and when the right-of-way becomes available. These monies can also be used for the construction of improvements on such property.

III-14

If the City determines that community redevelopment is feasible in El Cerrito, and should any selected project areas include a program for street improvements or municipal parking lots, tax increment financing can be utilized as a funding source for bonds.

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT. Special Assessment Districts can be a financing tool which can be utilized to construct a wide range of capital improvement such as street lighting, street construction or parking facilities. Under this method of funding, the design and construction costs are distributed among the benefiting property owners in the assessment district. This method of financing has been used previously in the City for street lighting and street improvements with good results.

CALIFORNIA GAS TAX FUNDS. These funds can be applied to the design, improvement, construction and maintenance of streets and other vehicle-related facilities. However, these funds are segregated into various categories which limit their expenditure. The distribution of these funds is based upon a per capita and vehicle registration basis.

FEDERAL AID URBAN FUNDS. These funds provided for under the 1973 Federal Highway Act may be utilized for improvements of routes on the Federal Aid Urban System. These routes are high volume carriers of regional significance. The streets in El Cerrito which are on the Federal Aid Urban System are San Pablo Avenue, Carlson Boulevard, and a portion of Cutting Boulevard and Hill Street west of San Pablo Ave. These funds are allocated to the State-County for distribution. In Contra Costa County these funds are distributed on a priority basis but must include consideration for mass transit.

B. SCENIC ROUTES

1. INTRODUCTION

State Law requires the General Plan to include a Scenic Highways Element for establishing, protecting and developing scenic highways. The establishment of a scenic highway enables the local jurisdiction to take steps in protecting the scenic assets of the area in which the highway passes. These actions may include sign regulations, control of urban design, regulation of land use or site detail planning.

In undertaking the development of official scenic highways, the following should be considered: "The concept of the 'complete highway' which is a highway which incorporates not only safety, utility, and economy but also beauty." Although the emphasis of the Scenic Highways Element is on the designation of state highway routes as "scenic" routes, this does not preclude local agencies from developing and adopting local scenic routes.

III-15

In assessing local scenic routes, it is the City's policy:

- To encourage establishing attractive and efficient inter-urban links.
- To conserve, enhance and protect scenic views observable from scenic routes.
- To enhance the attractiveness and visual qualities of scenic routes in El Cerrito.

A scenic route or scenic highway in El Cerrito may be generally defined as a street or roadway which has visual significance and contains potential for improving the aesthetic appearance of the community as well as traverses an area containing scenic value or provides significant views to areas of scenic value.

2. SCENIC HIGHWAYS - SAN PABLO AVENUE

San Pablo Avenue is a street which traverses from Oakland, through El Cerrito, to Rodeo. Historically, this route served as the only major connector linking the various cities along its length until the Eastshore Freeway was constructed. The avenue from the El Cerrito south city limits to Cutting Boulevard is still on the State Highway System as State Route No. 123. The avenue is an important inter-urban connector with predominantly commercial land uses along its right-of-way. Because El Cerrito's retail concentration is along San Pablo Avenue and because major entrances to the City relate to the avenue, it serves as an important visual and functional feature in the City that should be enhanced and developed to its full potential. A Concept Plan for San Pablo Avenue intended to develop the assets of the avenue, to reinforce the City's economy, and enhance the circulation along the avenue and adjacent streets, was prepared in 1967, but has not been fully implemented. Adoption of San Pablo Avenue as an Urban Designated Scenic Highway would officially recognize the importance of the avenue and reaffirm the 1967 belief that the Concept Plan should be implemented. (For a Summary of the San Pablo Avenue Design Concept Plan see appendix.)

III-16

It is recommended that: (1) San Pablo Avenue be designated as an Urban Scenic Highway, and (2) an Urban Design Plan for the avenue should be developed to implement the 1967 Concept Plan.

It has been noted in a subsequent chapter that El Cerrito does not have regulatory control of land uses on both sides of San Pablo Avenue since a significant portion of land west of the avenue is in the city limits of Richmond. However, in an interim decision, the Contra Costa County Local Agency Formation Commission has designated that portion of San Pablo which is in Richmond (one lot deep) to be within El Cerrito's sphere of influence. Richmond has also designated that portion of San Pablo Avenue as a Scenic Highway. Mutual cooperation in the enhancement of the avenue should be encouraged and any Urban Design Plan developed during the interim should consider a Master Plan approach to the solution. (see Figure III-d)

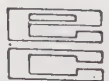
III-17

FIGURE III-d:
LOCAL
SCENIC ROUTES

SCENIC ROUTE



0 2000 4000



EL CERRITO
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

IV. COMMUNITY SAFETY

A. SEISMIC SAFETY: A SUMMARY

1. BACKGROUND

Following the San Fernando earthquake of February 1971, the California Legislature enacted into law the requirement that a Seismic Safety Element be a part of a city's general plan. Shortly thereafter, the cities of El Cerrito, Richmond and San Pablo formed the Tri-Cities Planning Study Project for the purpose of developing Seismic Safety, Open Space and Conservation Elements.

The resulting Seismic Safety Study, developed with the considerable assistance of the Citizens Advisory Committees was published in September 1973. Subsequently this study was approved by both the El Cerrito Planning Commission and the City Council as the Seismic Safety Element of the El Cerrito General Plan. In taking this action, both the Commission and the Council recognized that some parts of the study are simply informative, and that the adoption of the study as the Seismic Safety Element committed the City to the implementation of the recommended policies only to the extent that they applied to the City of El Cerrito. Included in the Seismic Safety Study were such items as: (a) detailed findings of the earthquake characteristics of the City, including geologic and structural factors, present uses and disaster implications; (b) policies to guide future development and regulate existing development; and (c) specific recommendations for action. This section summarizes the primary findings and recommendations of the Seismic Safety Study and also notes the implementation steps since the Element's adoption. (For more detailed information, the Seismic Study itself and the Environmental Analysis of Western Contra Costa County should be consulted.)

IV-1

2. DESCRIPTION OF AREA SEISMIC HAZARDS

According to state law, the Seismic Safety Element must contain an identification and appraisal of seismic hazards such as susceptibility to surface rupture from faulting, to ground shaking, to ground failures, or to the effects of seismically induced waves, tsunamis, or seiches. The element shall also include an appraisal of mudslides, landslides, and slope stability as necessary geologic hazards that must be considered simultaneously with the other hazards.

The Hayward fault goes through El Cerrito near the eastern city limits. (Figure IV-a) Development in that fault area has been limited to large-size lots for single-family residences. Farther north the area has been kept in open space by the operation of the Mira Vista County Club.

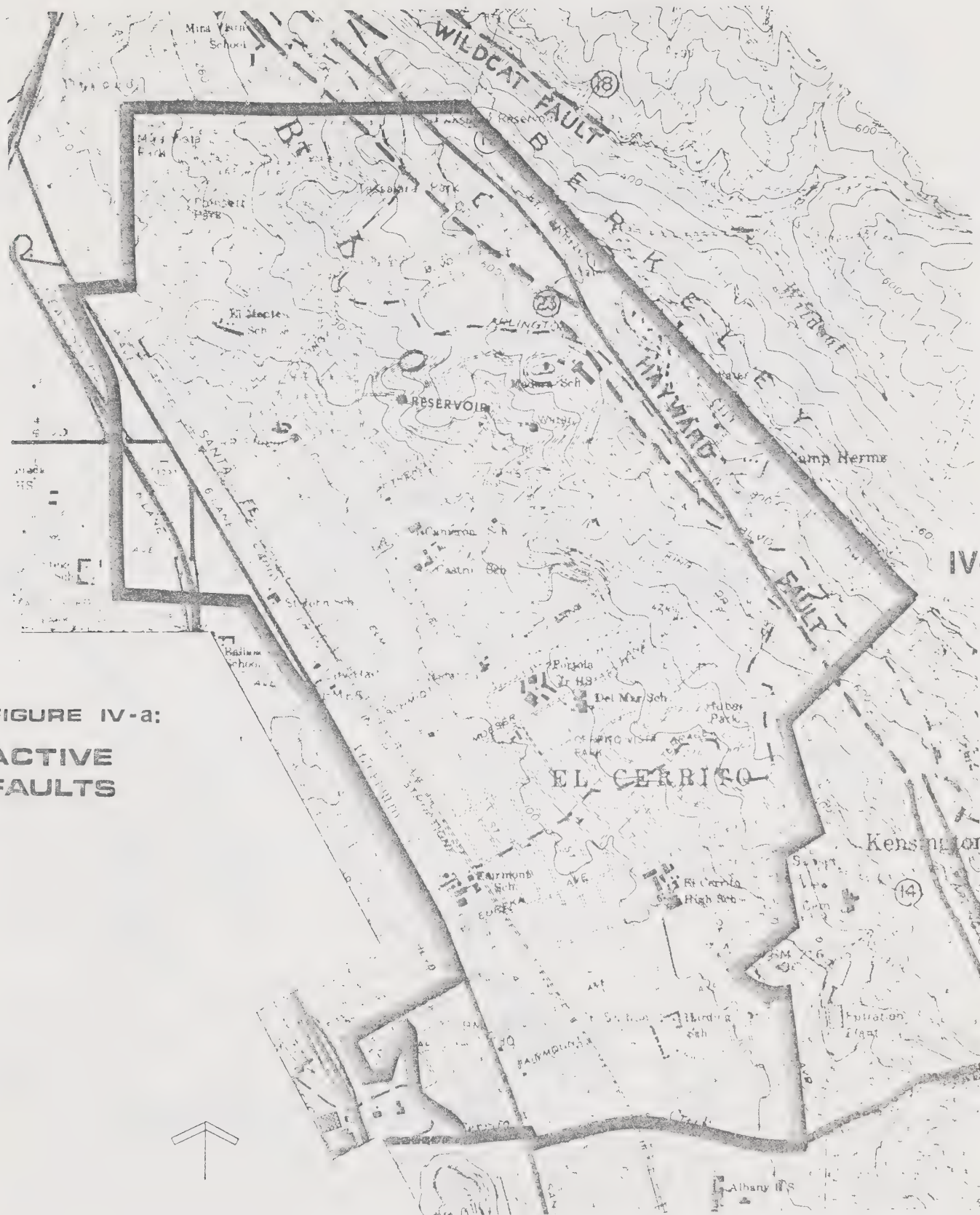
The Hayward fault has a history of creep, as well as of major earthquakes; however no large scale offsets have been recorded in this area for 100 years. Some experts feel that continuous creep, by releasing stress, is a deterrent to catastrophic ruptures. However, the fact that California is located within a major earthquake belt makes it a possibility that earthquakes will occur along some of the faults. Major movements along the San Andreas or other faults could have as great or greater impact on El Cerrito as a shift along the Hayward fault itself.

Another geologic factor of increasing significance with the Bay Region and in El Cerrito is landslides. As the level areas and the more stable slopes have been built upon, people and houses have spread to hill areas which may not be suitable for development. Because of the complexity of factors involved in landslides, slope areas will have to be subjected to intensive study and perhaps to developmental restrictions in order to protect future residents. (Figure IV-b)

3. RISK ANALYSIS

The Seismic Safety Element contains the following conclusions with respect to risk:

- a. Since minimizing risk often results in higher cost, the final decision is a balance of the costs involved and the level of acceptable risk. The cost of further risk reduction must be weighed against other uses of the money which might result in more benefit to the community.
- b. Unwilling risks should be lower than those taken willingly by the public. For this reason buildings which must be utilized by the public should be low risk structures.
- c. Public agencies should provide information on risks so that the public's exposure to unknown risk is reduced.
- d. As much as possible, the risks should be balanced so that the people receiving the benefit are also those undertaking the risk.



IV-3

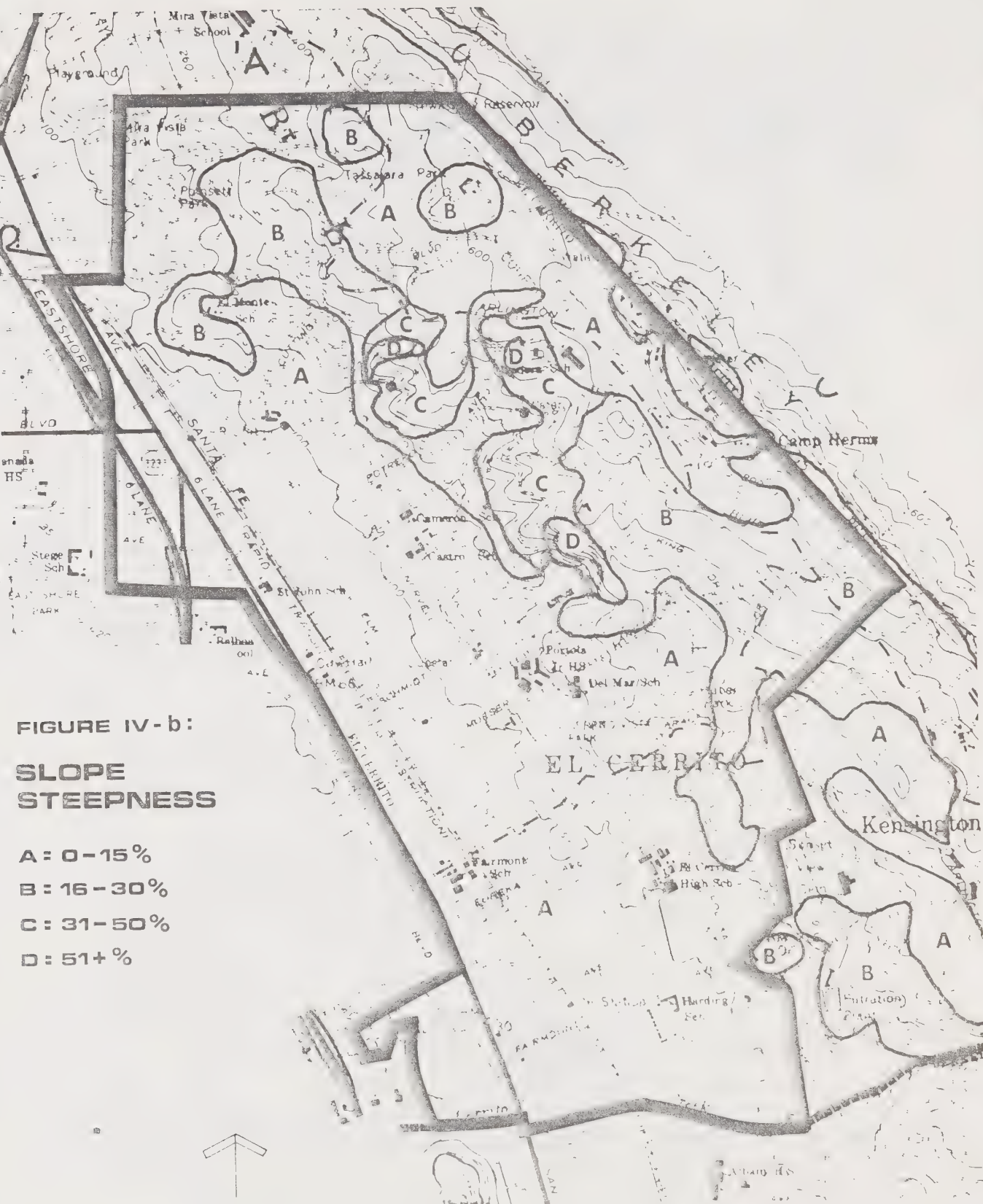
FIGURE IV-a:
ACTIVE
FAULTS



FIGURE IV-b:

**SLOPE
STEEPNESS**

A: 0-15%
B: 16-30%
C: 31-50%
D: 51+ %



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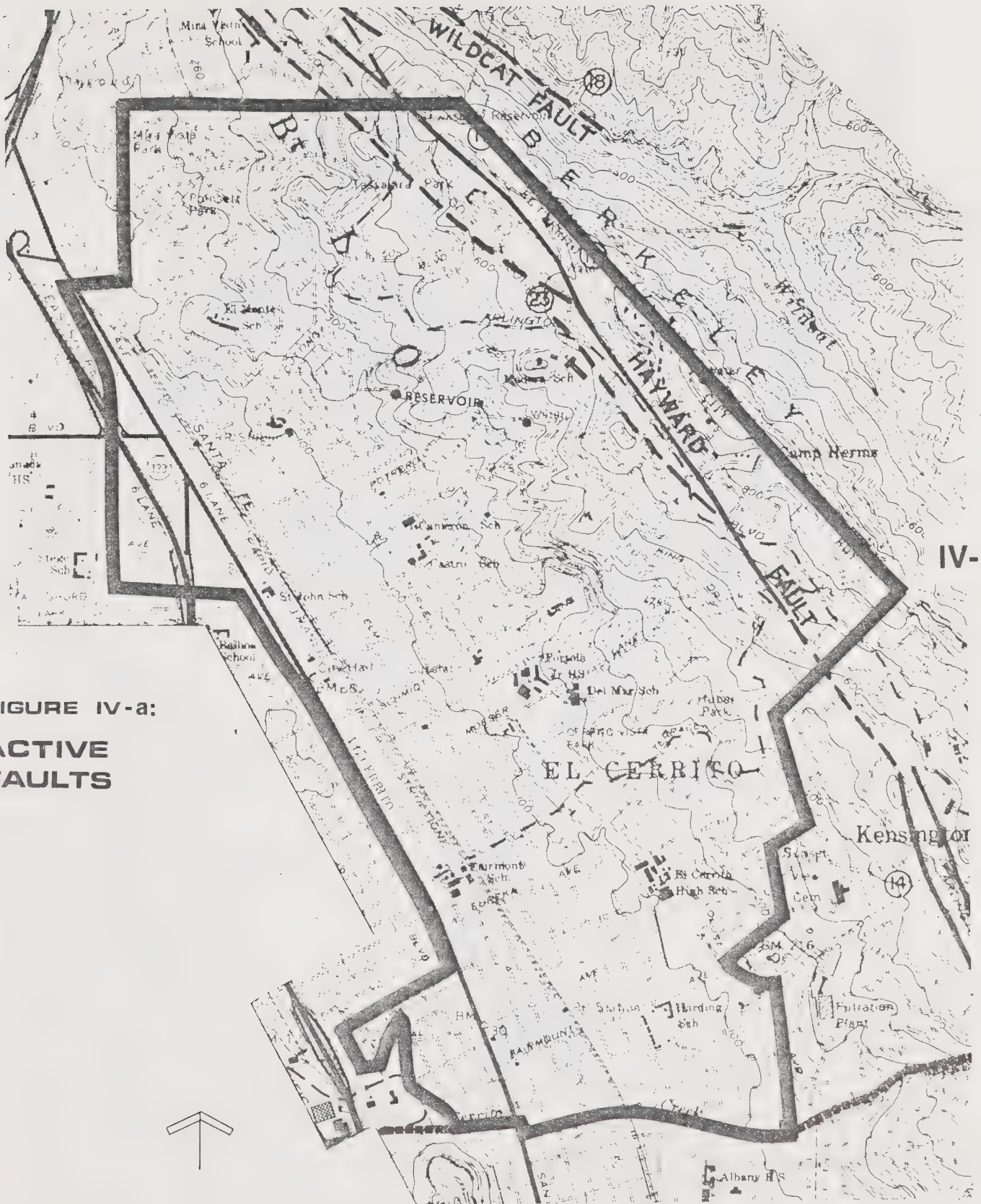
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IV-2

3. RISK ANALYSIS

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- d. As much as possible, the risks should be balanced so that the people receiving the benefit are also those undertaking the risk.



IV-3

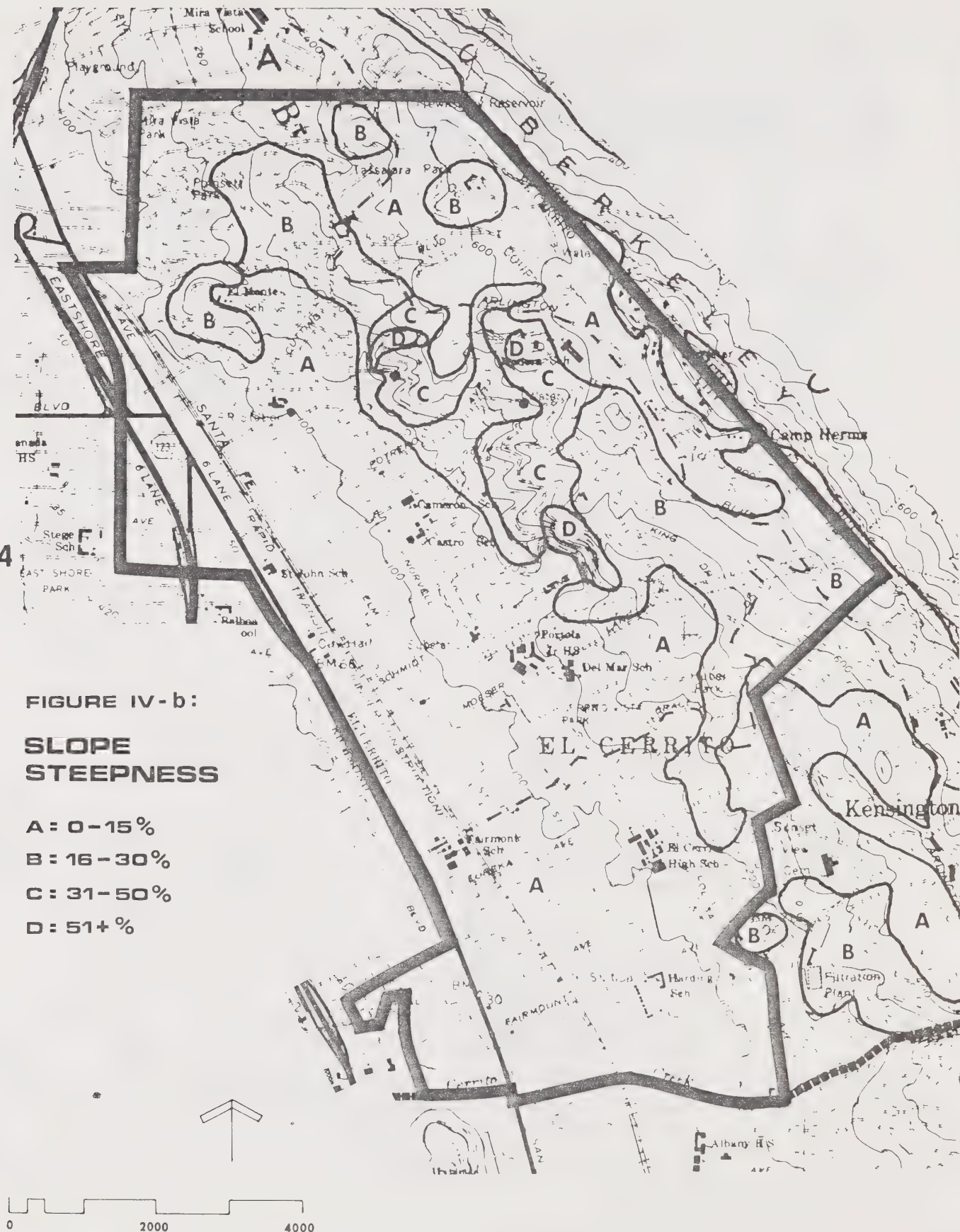
FIGURE IV-a:
ACTIVE
FAULTS

0 2000 4000

IV-4

**FIGURE IV-b:
SLOPE
STEEPNESS**

- A: 0-15%**
- B: 16-30%**
- C: 31-50%**
- D: 51+%**



4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

The Tri-Cities Citizens Advisory Committee on Seismic Safety made several recommendations which were incorporated into the Study. Although all have been included in the adopted Element, it was recognized by the Planning Commission and the Council that not all of these are capable of being implemented by the City of El Cerrito alone.

a. MAINTENANCE AND DISSEMINATION OF SEISMIC SAFETY INFORMATION.

- 1) Printing and Distribution of Seismic Safety Report. Since the Federal Grant allowed for only the printing of a limited number of copies of the Seismic Safety Report for local distribution and since the report should have a wider distribution, the Committee recommends that each City Council appropriate enough money for a reprinting of the report for further distribution in its community.
- 2) Dissemination of Seismic Safety Information. Geologic and structural hazard information relating to private development should be readily available. Each city should establish a procedure for informing residents, businesses, property owners and prospective property owners of seismic hazards.
- 3) Maintenance of Seismic Safety Information. Each city should designate either its Public Works or Planning Department to maintain a well organized collection of information on all matters pertinent to the seismic hazards of that city and should assign to that department the responsibility to seek out and collect all such information.
- 4) Collection of Structural Hazards Information. The Tri-Cities Study has collected structural hazards information on thousands of structures in the area. Each building department should catalogue this information and expand it to include all known hazards over a period of years. Similarly, each city should direct its Public Works Department Survey Sections to place fault movement gauges and to monitor their movement over years. These activities should be regular projects during slack period of construction activity.

IV-5

b. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM.

- 1) Development of Joint Tri-Cities Disaster Preparedness Program. The three cities should retain a consultant who will assist in formulating a joint-action disaster preparedness program. This program should be directed by a jointly hired full-time professional disaster preparedness coordinator. By pooling their resources, the cities can not only afford a better local program but also can more easily become eligible for various state and federal programs such as 50% reimbursement for a disaster coordinator's salary.

IV-6

- 2) Establishment of Emergency Operating Centers. Each city should establish an Emergency Operating Center where key executives can direct and control emergency operations. The city manager, chief of police, fire chief, civil preparedness coordinator and others at this EOC will have the same information on the emergency situation, and they will be able to coordinate decisions more rapidly by being face-to-face. The Emergency Operating Center must have means of communicating with all operating forces, with other levels of government, and with the public.
- 3) Public Education Relating to Natural Disasters. A program of public education relating to natural disaster should be established. The community's leadership must be ready to give emergency instructions and information to their citizens through radio or television stations or newspapers. People must be told practical things that they should or should not do when an emergency threatens or has occurred.
- 4) Radio Communication for Western Contra Costa County Emergency Facilities. The cities should carefully study the radio communication situation among western Contra Costa County's essential services. At least one area, hospitals, are currently deficient in communications capabilities. The cities should request the Board of Supervisors to provide money to the hospitals of western Contra Costa County in order that they may follow the lead of Brookside Hospital in developing radio communication capabilities.
- 5) Role of Disaster Preparedness Planning With Local Government. Whether or not the cities form a joint disaster preparedness program with a professional disaster preparedness coordinator, they must take immediate steps to improve their own disaster planning programs. They must also test and practice these plans in exercises that simulate different kinds of emergencies or disasters.
- 6) Local Disaster Preparedness Review and Recommendation Authority. Each City Council should designate its Safety Commission or other similar board as the body that evaluates and makes recommendations concerning the adequacy of the local disaster preparedness program.
- 7) Holding of Joint Earthquake Response Exercise. Once the three communities have upgraded their disaster response capability to the point where it appears that they could respond to an earthquake, a full-scale western Contra Costa County simulated Earthquake Exercise should be held which will include citizens, police and fire departments, city personnel, major industries, the county government and the military.

c. PUBLIC FACILITIES OWNED BY THE CITY OF EL CERRITO.

- 1) Structural Evaluation of City Hall. A detailed structural investigation of the city hall of El Cerrito should be made by a structural engineer, and recommendations for modifications to the buildings should be made.
- 2) Structural Review of all Public Buildings. The buildings which house the vital government functions necessary to coordinate post-disaster activity such as the city hall should be periodically reviewed for their structural adequacy and ability to survive a major earthquake. All public buildings which can serve as a refuge and as an administration area in the event of a disaster should be designed to meet the most rigid earthquake standards. Existing public buildings should be analyzed for their potential disaster utility and for their structural adequacy. After the preliminary review, a more thorough investigation of certain critical structures may be necessary.
- 3) Condition of Fire Stations. A detailed investigation of all fire stations should be performed. This investigation should include access roads, utilities, building structure and geology of the site. All fire stations which are likely to be damaged by an earthquake to such an extent as to render their equipment inoperable, , should be adequately reinforced or abandoned.
- 4) Public Facilities in Fault Zone Areas. Geologic studies should be undertaken regarding all public buildings and structures located in a Fault Zone Area to determine whether or not the facility is subject to damage from ground rupture. If the test determines that damage is likely, corrective steps should be taken such as phasing out the facility.

d. OTHER PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES.

- 1) Schools. The Tri-Cities Area is fortunate in having modern well-maintained schools. However, the location of many of the schools warrants a more thorough investigation, particularly relating to such factors as liquefaction, intense ground-shaking, and fault rupture. Therefore, the cities should inform the School District of the conditions found by the structural engineer. The School District should then review in more detail the schools on or near suspected poor foundation materials, even though these schools technically meet the requirements of the Field Act. And, even schools meeting all present laws should have a general review to determine the "minor" hazards. If warranted, the School District should take precautionary measures to reduce the effects of these hazards.

- 2) Information from Utilities. The City should request the East Bay Municipal Utilities District, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company and the Pacific Telephone Company, and the State Highway Department to prepare seismic safety evaluations of their facilities in the area. Each agency should provide a detailed statement concerning which facilities might fail and what their efforts are to prevent or immediately correct unavoidable failures. Special reports should be made regarding their construction techniques in landslide, fault zone, and liquefaction areas. The seismic safety programs of these agencies should be reviewed and evaluated by the city's Seismic and Geologic Hazards Review Board or Committee.
- 3) Safety of Churches. Although the churches in the City are generally located in fairly good geological areas and have low potential for hazard caused by construction deficiencies, the structural engineers' report should be made available to the churches for their review.

e. STRUCTURAL HAZARDS IN PRIVATE BUILDINGS.

- 1) Dangerous Buildings Abatement Program. The City should begin a dangerous buildings abatement program and pass ordinances to that effect. All privately-owned public buildings which are determined to be extremely likely to lead to loss of life in an earthquake should be required to be torn down or to be made structurally safe at the earliest possible date. Any program designed to achieve this goal should be fair to the owners of the structures by allowing for a reasonable length of economic life of the building. In addition to a long range program, all high occupancy buildings constructed before 1933 should be immediately reviewed by the city building department for their structural adequacy in relation to earthquakes.
- 2) Dangerous Parapets, Signs, Glass, Marquees and General Ornamentation in Commercial Areas. All large signs, marquees, and general ornamentation present in commercial areas should be reviewed in detail in accordance with the latest practices and experience. The City should adopt an ordinance whereby the existing hazardous parapets and similar hazards are eliminated or reinforced. Enforcement of such an ordinance should be phased so that areas of high traffic would be corrected first.

f. LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS.

- 1) New Development Regulations. New ordinances or amendments to existing ordinances, land use regulations and procedures should be implemented that will mandate the review, evaluation, and restriction of land use that may be subject to undue risk in

in geologically hazardous areas. This proposed program should include the incorporation of requirements relating specifically to geologic hazards into subdivision, grading, zoning, and other ordinances where needed.

- 2) Appraisal of Individual Development Projects. In the development of a private or public project the potential of significant geologic, seismic, soils, and hydrologic problems should be resolved at the earliest stage of project approval rather than after a project has become fully committed. Detailed study and reporting should be made of seismic safety considerations in all Environmental Impact Reports. Those sections of an Environmental Impact Report dealing with geology should be produced, reviewed and approved by geo-technically competent persons prior to presentation of the report to designated city board or commissions.
- 3) Creation of Geologic Hazards Special Management Areas. Geologic Hazards Special Management Areas should be officially designated for the fault zone and landslide areas. Within these "Special Management Areas" regulations should be adopted relative to existing and future development. The construction of a building or structure near a known active fault or landslide area should be allowed only after careful review. The local cities should take whatever steps they can to prevent the construction of structures for human occupancy and for public service facilities (highways, dams, bridges, utilities, etc) on an active fault or over known landslides except where it shall be deemed essential to do so for the public welfare.
- 4) Adoption of Uniform Building Code. The City has adopted the provisions of the 1973 Uniform Building Code because of its greatly improved earthquake provisions.

IV-9

g. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

- 1) Creation of Geologic and Seismic Hazards Review Board or Committee. Each city of the study area should consider the creation of a policy recommendation and administrative body to assist in the implementation of policies adopted in its Seismic Safety Element. This body might be a citizen Geologic and Seismic Hazards Review Board, or a Design Review Board with expanded functions. Consultants could also be hired to fulfill this responsibility. Geo-technically trained staff, consultants or a citizen board would add geologic, soil and structural engineering expertise to local government in order to guide planning and public works programs and assure effective compliance with regulations requiring geologic and engineering reports.

- 2) Continued Role of Seismic Safety Citizens Advisory Committee. It is important that the understanding developed by the members of the Seismic Safety Citizens Advisory Committee not be wasted. If the members are not part of the proposed Geologic and Seismic Hazards Review Board or Committee, the members from any one of the cities could well serve that city in a continuing role as Citizens Seismic Safety Advisors at least for the next two years.
- 3) Public Acquisition of Geologically Hazardous Lands. The cities or the East Bay Regional Park District should acquire, whenever feasible, lands subject to fault rupturing or landsliding. Initial priority should be given to parcels that have also been deemed desirable for open space, trails, vista points and riparian and native woodlands in the Open Space and Conservation Plan.

h. IMPLEMENTATION.

Some specific recommendations of the Seismic Safety Element are being implemented in 1974. Geologic Special Studies Zones have been designated by the State of California Division of Mines and Geology for fault zones and state regulations now govern new construction in these areas. The City has adopted the 1973 edition of the Uniform Building Code; environmental impact reports on all projects in the City take into consideration the possibility of geologic hazards; and a committee, which had been appointed by the City Council to develop a program of implementation, has made its report. In this report are set forth recommendations for: composition of a Geologic and Seismic Hazards Board, and duties of that board, including the development of ordinances and regulations for controlling seismic and geologic hazards and review of appeals of departmental decisions on these topics. (see El Cerrito's Seismic Safety Element Implementation Report, February 1975)

This General Plan document integrates seismic considerations with other considerations in all affected elements, especially land use.

B. SAFETY

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Safety Element is to develop safety considerations in the planning process. The goals of the Safety Element are as follows:

To recognize safety hazards -- both natural and manmade -- and mitigate their possible impact upon the community.

To help insure the protection of life and property from safety hazards by expanding the community's capacity to deal with them.

To educate the public to the effects of safety hazards and to promote public safety in the community.

2. SEISMIC AND GEOLOGIC HAZARD

IV-11

For a summary of these policies, see "Summary: Seismic Safety" on page IV-I of the General Plan. For a report on implementation of the Seismic Safety Element, see El Cerrito Seismic Safety Element Implementation Committee Report.

3. FIRE SAFETY

Fire Safety is an important consideration in the community and requires the cooperation between the public and private sectors to minimize the danger of life and loss of property due to fire. The following policies will help insure fire safety in the community:

- a. Maintain Highest Standards of Fire Safety. The City should review, amend, and update, at regular intervals, all relevant public codes and ordinances to incorporate the most current knowledge and highest standards of fire safety. The City should also review at adequate intervals, the adequacy of existing fire service facilities throughout the community in relation to such factors as hydrant capacity, peak load water requirements, fire access roads to wildland areas, and other fire protection factors.
- b. Promote Fire Safety. The City should continue to promote fire safety in El Cerrito through fire prevention programs and public information programs. Such programs help educate the public to private actions which contribute to community fire safety and to the importance of adequate private fire protection facilities and precautionary actions. Emphasis should be given to programs devoted to the following:

- (1) define fire hazard areas of the City as they relate to definable fire and fire safety hazards described in Appendix H.
 - (2) establish mapping of high hazard areas.
 - (3) strengthen existing codes in relation to such high hazard areas.
- c. Encourage the Use of Fire Retardant Landscaping. The City should encourage the use of fire retardant vegetation for landscaping.
 - d. Upgrade Fire Protection of Existing Development. Many older residential and commercial structures lack adequate fire safety provisions. The City should seek programs to upgrade fire protection capability in existing developments.
 - e. Encourage EBMUD to Insure a Continuous Changing Water Supply. EBMUD should insure a continuous water supply for fire protection in the event an earthquake occurs.

IV-12

4. FLOODING

The following policies should be continued to reduce the risk of flooding in El Cerrito and minimize property damage in the event flooding does occur:

- a. Improve Storm Drainage Facilities in the City. Funding sources for the improvement of storm drainage facilities, (beyond the local tax rate), are extremely limited and such improvements must be funded by available city funds or keyed to private development. Efforts should be made to provide funds for the improvement of these, including reinstatement of the system of accumulating moneys from each year's General Fund to meet the substantial cost of any such projects.
- b. Provide a High Level of Maintenance for the City's Storm Drainage Facilities. In order to maintain unobstructed drainage courses, it is recommended that existing laws prohibiting the dumping of debris, fill or other waste materials into creeks and channels, and the littering of garbage should be strictly enforced. The City should also continue to maintain a high level of maintenance for its storm drainage facilities. New developments should be carefully reviewed to insure that adequate storm drain facilities are available both on and off the site.

- c. Inform the Public of El Cerrito's Eligibility for Federal Flood and Mudslide Insurance. Residents in flood prone areas should be informed of El Cerrito's eligibility for this flood insurance and the benefits of having the insurance. In the event of a disaster, residents who do not have the insurance will receive less benefits than those who do. HUD/Federal Insurance Administration's Special Flood Hazard Areas Maps are on file in the Public Works Department at City Hall.
- d. Encourage the Cooperation of Other Jurisdictions in Solving Storm Drainage Problems. In areas such as the Bay View, urban flooding is caused by a number of factors including the inadequacy of downstream drainage in other jurisdictions (City of Richmond and Cal-Trans). Such jurisdictions should be encouraged to participate and help solve such drainage problems. In the event that Kensington decides to install new storm drainage facilities, El Cerrito should encourage the community authority to allow El Cerrito to review the plans to insure that the proposed system will be compatible with the design and capacity of El Cerrito's system and to encourage that authority to contribute to any adjacent system changes as a result of such plans.
- e. Encourage County to Expend Flood Control Moneys in El Cerrito for Correction of Kensington Drainage.

IV-13

5. POLLUTION HAZARD

The term pollution is used to describe a number of environmental conditions associated with the contamination of the physical environment by impurities introduced by man, which includes the affects of noise as well as air, water and soil contamination. Pollution is also a regional problem independent of political boundaries. The following policies will help better the environment:

- a. Promote a Clean Environment. Efforts should be made at opportune times to educate the community to the potential health hazards posed by pollution and possible solutions. Such educational programs sponsored by educational institutions should also be supported. Public awareness of the problem and a positive attitude toward its solution will greatly contribute to solving the pollution problem.
- b. Cooperate with Regional Agencies. The City should continue to cooperate with and to promote the efforts of the Bay Area Air Pollution Control District and other regional organizations in their efforts to clean up the environment.

- c. Encourage Development of Clean Energy Sources. The City should lend its support to efforts by public and private agencies to develop new sources of energy for all uses, heating and industrial as well as transportation, that will be non-polluting of our atmosphere.
- d. Improve Local Public Transportation Service and Encourage Alternative Modes of Transportation. Along with improvement of existing local public transportation service, the City should endorse improvements for regional service. The development of alternative modes of transportation should be encouraged.
- e. Develop and Improve the Pedestrian Environment in El Cerrito. Creation of a pleasant and inviting environment which the pedestrian can relate to at a more human scale can contribute greatly to decreasing reliance upon the automobile.

6. TRAFFIC SAFETY

IV-14

Traffic Safety is an important consideration in the development of the community. El Cerrito has a traffic safety program which involves the close cooperation of the Engineering Division and the Police Department in responding to traffic hazards. While the traffic safety program monitors the traffic conditions in the City, the following policies will assist in maintaining and improving traffic safety in the City:

- a. Implement the Circulation Element. The Circulation Element contains solutions for better control and coordination of traffic which relates directly to traffic safety. These should be implemented. Improved public transit can also serve to provide an alternate means of travel and reduce traffic volumes. Every effort should be made to prevent steps which would delay traffic and impede its flow around collector points, such as parking lots.
- b. Implement the Plans for San Pablo Avenue. The San Pablo Avenue Concept Plan and the Urban Design Plan which contain closure of certain streets and the construction of median strips should be implemented. These improvements will increase the efficiency of traffic circulation along San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito's principal arterial, and reduce the number of accidents.
- c. Maintain a Traffic Safety Program. Such a program will insure the monitoring of traffic safety needs in the City in response to changes in traffic conditions.
- d. Promote Pedestrian Safety. In conjunction with other steps to improve safety and to improve the pedestrian environment, all steps should be taken which will add to the safety of pedestrians and protection of pedestrian areas.

7. HEALTH SAFETY

The sewer lines in the Stege Sanitary District are half a century old and contain some lines which do not meet current standards. The lines are also subject to seepage and water infiltration during the rainy season. The Public Facilities Element describes this situation further. The present condition of the sewer system is a potential threat to health safety of the community and should be recognized. The City should urge Stege Sanitary District to establish a fiscally sound plan for gradual replacement of El Cerrito's antiquated sewerage lines.

3. SAFETY FROM CRIME

Safety from crime is necessary to the enjoyment of life and contributes to the quality of life in the community. El Cerrito has a crime prevention program which helps create a safer community through greater citizen awareness and deterrents to crime.

IV-15

The following policies will help to discourage crime and increase personal well-being and safety in the community:

- a. Strive to Achieve High Standards of Crime Prevention in El Cerrito. Support should be given to innovative programs for deterring crime as well as research on crime prevention.
- b. Encourage Community Involvement in Crime Prevention. There is a need for greater community involvement in crime prevention to aid law enforcement in providing increased neighborhood security and individual safety. Through such community involvement, citizens can gain a greater awareness of crime prevention programs and have direct input in expressing neighborhood needs.
- c. Promote Public Education Programs on Crime Prevention. Public education programs stressing the importance of individual actions in preventing or deterring crime should be actively supported. Such programs should make special efforts to reach sectors of the community such as the elderly, which may be unable to participate in programs because of mobility problems and youngsters who can contribute greatly in crime prevention efforts.

9. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The development of local capabilities for effective action in emergencies is essential to emergency preparedness. This requires that planning be done and preparedness measures be taken before there is an emergency. The provisions of the El Cerrito Emergency Plan, the Seismic Safety Study for the General Plan, should be adopted and the various programs of each document should be addressed and implemented.

V. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A. LAND USE

1. INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element is intended to serve as a guide for the future physical development of El Cerrito based upon a design population of 30,000 residents. The Plan is long-range in scope and recognizes the community's goal to protect and enhance the quality of family living in El Cerrito. It is not intended as a specific guide for day-to-day decisions but rather as the framework that provides the orientation for the development of more immediate planning strategies.

The following policies serve as a framework for the land use proposals contained in this element:

- To enhance the identity of the community by articulating well defined patterns of land use.
- To encourage the clustering of new commercial development unified by complementary uses and harmonious architectural design to strengthen the local economy.
- To promote the orderly development of the two Rapid Transit stations as focal points for integrated transportation, commercial and residential centers.
- To encourage quality residential development.
- To encourage adequate amenities in both residential and commercial areas.

V-1

2. SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

An analysis of existing land use is an important step in the development of El Cerrito's General Plan since it provides the basic data necessary to describe land characteristics and the current pattern of urban form. The existing land use analysis will establish a basis from which the development of vacant land or the redevelopment of problem areas can be planned and guided in accordance with General Plan Goals.

The following is a brief summary of a more detailed inventory of existing land use contained in Appendix D.

The land area within the City Limits of El Cerrito is approximately 2,337 acres or approximately 3.7 square miles. As described in Appendix D, this total represents the actual "net" land area of the City totaled by approximately 8,537 Assessor's Parcels plus the total land area included in vacant land and rights-of-way. Of this area, 73.7% is developed with the remainder vacant or undeveloped land (6.9%) and rights-of-way (19.5). (see Figure V-a and b) Included among the predominant land use features are the following:

- a. The major concentration of retail uses is found in the El Cerrito Plaza area with smaller retail clusters on Fairmount Avenue and Stockton Avenue serving as neighborhood shopping areas. Other retail uses are scattered along the length of San Pablo Avenue.
- b. Residential uses lie predominantly east of San Pablo Avenue with multiple family dwellings located along both sides of the BART right-of-way and a predominance of single-family homes spreading eastward up into the El Cerrito hills.
- c. Several large areas of the City account for the land use in private and public open space. These areas make up significant features in the landscape.

In physical composition, El Cerrito is overwhelmingly residential with only a limited area developed for commercial purposes, with no significant industrial activity. This residential composition is reinforced by the distribution of generously scaled school sites, parks and open space oriented toward family living. Again, the concept of El Cerrito as a "City of Homes" is evident in its pattern of development, and the maturity of the City is indicated by the small amount of vacant land it has available for new development.

3. ASSUMPTIONS OF THE ELEMENT

A basic assumption of the Land Use Element is that there is a strong desire to improve the character of El Cerrito. However, growth, change or reconstruction are not so easily accomplished by a mature community such as El Cerrito which has reached the stage of almost full development of its land area, as it is by a community with reserves of vacant land. Problems of fragmentation of property ownership, of deterioration of the environment caused by inappropriate and out-dated land uses, and of the economic difficulties of competing with cheap land elsewhere create obstacles in the path of improving and restructuring the City which should not be under-estimated. While

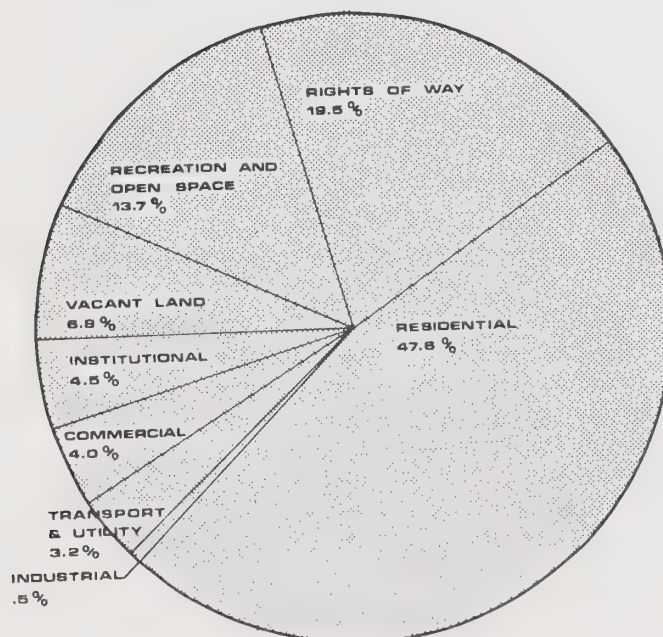
FIGURE V-a: EL CERRITO AREA COMPARISON, 1974.

CATEGORY	ACRES	PERCENT OF TOTAL CITY AREA
Developed Land	1721.13	73.65
Vacant Land	159.94	6.84
NET LAND AREA (sub-total)	1881.07	
Rights-of-way	<u>456.0</u>	<u>19.51</u>
GROSS LAND AREA (TOTAL)	2337.07	100.00

Source: Contra Costa County Land Use and Transportation Study 1970; El Cerrito Planning Department.

V-3

FIGURE V-b: EXISTING LAND USE DISTRIBUTION



Source: El Cerrito Planning Department, 1974

there are obstacles to improvement, there are a number of influences at work, which, if given the necessary attention, can improve the City.

Transit Stations as Focal Points. Probably the most significant influence is the location of two Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stations within the City, one at Fairmount Avenue (Plaza Station) and the other at Cutting Boulevard (DeI Norte Station). These stations can become focal points in the community around which new commercial and residential facilities can be attracted. The Linear Park with its pedestrian pathway can serve to knit the community together through its linkage of educational and civic facilities with the more intensive residential areas it penetrates.

Dispersal of the Office Space Function. A rapidly-growing sector of the economy consists of the kinds of activity which are classified in the professional, office and financial category of the General Plan. There has been a trend in recent years for these functions to become more decentralized and for suburban locations to be selected as an alternative to a downtown, central site. With the advent of rapid transit, these trends could assume importance for El Cerrito, which has an excess of commercial land along San Pablo Avenue, in many cases not far removed from the transit stations.

V-4

Clustering of Commercial Uses. Retail development along the Avenue is quite spotty and several stretches are almost entirely lacking in active business enterprises while other areas are devoted to open less-intensive commercial uses. One of the basic considerations in the planning program, affecting both the General Plan prepared by Duncan & Jones and the San Pablo Avenue Design Concept Plan, is how to re-allocate the land areas abutting the Avenue in order to increase the intensity of use as well as to improve the appearance of the street, and yet to recognize the economic factors of land value and investment return. The potential for support which could be realized from greater concentration, functional specialization and quality of site layout and architectural design is dissipated by haphazard and poorly-conceived developments.

Limits of Commercial Location. The convenience of living close to stores offering the convenience goods which are purchased regularly (food, drugs, sundries, etc.) appears to be offset for many people by the real or imagined nuisances retail clusters create. These may relate to traffic, truck loading, noise, bright lights or effects upon property values and levels of maintenance. These nuisances are apparently real enough that the majority of residents in the areas east of Richmond Street would oppose the development of any new retail location in that section of El Cerrito, and are willing to accept the less convenient alternative of driving to stores located on San Pablo Avenue.

Recognition of Existing Parameters. Finally, because of the highly developed, mature character of the City, it is felt to be unrealistic in the revision of the General Plan to ignore the strong determinants of the existing urban fabric which the zoning districts and residential density patterns represent. New residential and commercial development must be compatible with existing uses as well as enhance the character of the City.

4. DESIGN CONCEPT

In keeping with the assumptions stated above and with El Cerrito's image as a "City of Homes", the design concept for the development of the future Land Use Plan should relate the intensity of development to the degree of accessibility of an area. In other words, the corridors created by transportation facilities should be developed for higher densities and high intensity uses should be clustered about transportation nodes. Such a "corridor and nuclei" concept would take greater advantage of the mutual attraction of transportation amenities and high-intensity uses and obtain greater assurance that such uses will not intrude upon lower intensity neighborhoods.

V-5

San Pablo Avenue is a strong influence in the urban form of the City. As a principal arterial, and an inter-urban linkage, it creates a corridor of high accessibility. The location of the two BART stations near the Avenue, one to the north, the other to the south, have potential to reinforce the spatial dimension of this transportation corridor as well as create foci for higher intensity uses. Such an organization of land use would establish a clear relationship between differing intensities of uses and clearly define an urban design framework for San Pablo Avenue. The usage of the Transit Station area for high intensity uses will strengthen the identity of these areas, encourage the use of public transportation facilities, and minimize disruption to stable low density areas. While density should remain low in less accessible areas, this does not preclude well designed and well controlled planned developments on carefully selected sites.

5. LAND USE POLICIES

The following is a summary of and description of each land use provision of the General Plan. These descriptions are supplemented graphically by the General Plan Summary Map at the end of the General Plan.

a. RESIDENTIAL PROVISIONS.

At the present time, the residential land use pattern is rather clearly defined and it is considered desirable to change the general

pattern of residential densities only to the extent that this change might allow greater assurance that proper relationships between residential uses are established. There are five residential density categories: Very Low, Low, Medium, Medium High, and High.

- 1) Very Low (0 to 6 dwelling units/net acre). This density category is intended to help preserve those developed and undeveloped areas which are situated on hill area terrain with average cross slopes greater than 20 percent. The developed areas in this category represent much of the land area in the Arlington Neighborhood, which has a pattern of detached homes on large lots. The presently undeveloped land lies in both the Kenilworth and Arlington Neighborhoods and represents possible areas for the filling-in process of similar large lot, single-family development or well designed planned developments.
- 2) Low Density (0 to 10 dwelling units/net acre). In general, it is felt desirable to disturb as little as possible the existing low density single-family residential patterns, which largely reflect the residential zoning districts in the City. The great majority of these areas contain homes in good to excellent condition which should be preserved. This category represents the great majority of dwellings which give El Cerrito its family-oriented lifestyle and residential character. Increasing density would in many instances require improvements and enlargement of the streets that would increase the traffic volumes penetrating these residential enclaves. This can be somewhat difficult in the absence of development on a large scale, accompanied by a comprehensive revision of the circulation system.

In those existing low density single-family neighborhoods where little potential exists for transition to higher density uses, (although these had been either zoned or designated for such higher density under the previous General Plan), this document restates the policy of favoring continuation of low density development. In those areas designated for higher density residential development in the previous Plan where the transition to higher densities has already progressed to a point that a trend is apparent, no such change is made.

- 3) Medium Density (0 to 20 dwelling units/net acre). This density category is created to serve as a low density multi-family residential category which could be established adjacent to single-family neighborhoods in a compatible manner. Such areas would consist of both owner-occupied and renter-occupied dwelling units. This category accommodates the traditional duplex type units. The General Plan designates as medium density those areas which are either transitional or presently contain traditional duplex development.

- 4) High Density (0 to 35 dwelling units/net acre). The provision for this residential category is a response to the need for redefining the existing high density provisions to better control development and provide for better living amenities in higher density projects. The provision of the high-density category can serve as a framework for modification of the zoning ordinance to relieve the emerging pattern of monotonous and congested small multi-family structures, provide for a better transition between lower density and higher density areas, and encourage the provision of greater living amenities. The gradual imposition of four-, five-, and six-unit structures upon a property-ownership pattern originally designed for single-family houses has created many unfortunate problems. The appearance of these structures has in many cases been poor, and the parking and traffic requirements generated have placed a strain on the relatively narrow local streets. The amenities provided by multiple-unit developments of this kind are minimal and in many cases it is only the continued existence of the single-family units remaining which enable the apartment residents to obtain livability and a sense of openness. In order to help this situation, proposals for new zoning regulations incorporating the types of amenities desired should be devised.
- 5) The General Plan recognizes the need for specialized housing for the elderly and physically handicapped residents of El Cerrito. In order to be responsive to this need, the General Plan provides a special density exemption for those developments with special design features and amenities for these residents which cannot normally be provided within the density ranges otherwise provided.

In several places along San Pablo Avenue, high-density residential areas are extended up to the Avenue. In other instances the break between high-density residential areas and commercial areas has been moved from the mid-block to the street parallel to San Pablo Avenue. These proposals reflect several different objectives which it is felt will achieve more desirable and effective development patterns.

Mention has already been made of the need to structure commercial development along San Pablo Avenue into cohesive, functionally specialized clusters and to indicate alternative economic uses for the surplus land separating these clusters. Higher density residential development can fill these needs, and can have a number of subsidiary advantages also. Attractive large-scale apartment structures along San Pablo Avenue can improve its appearance and also generate potential additional support for the retail concentrations. Beautification of the Avenue and removal of unsightly, marginal outlets can make it visually attractive. Moreover, to the person driving along the Avenue, such developments would provide the visual relief and punctuation needed to give it shape, form and a sense of identity.

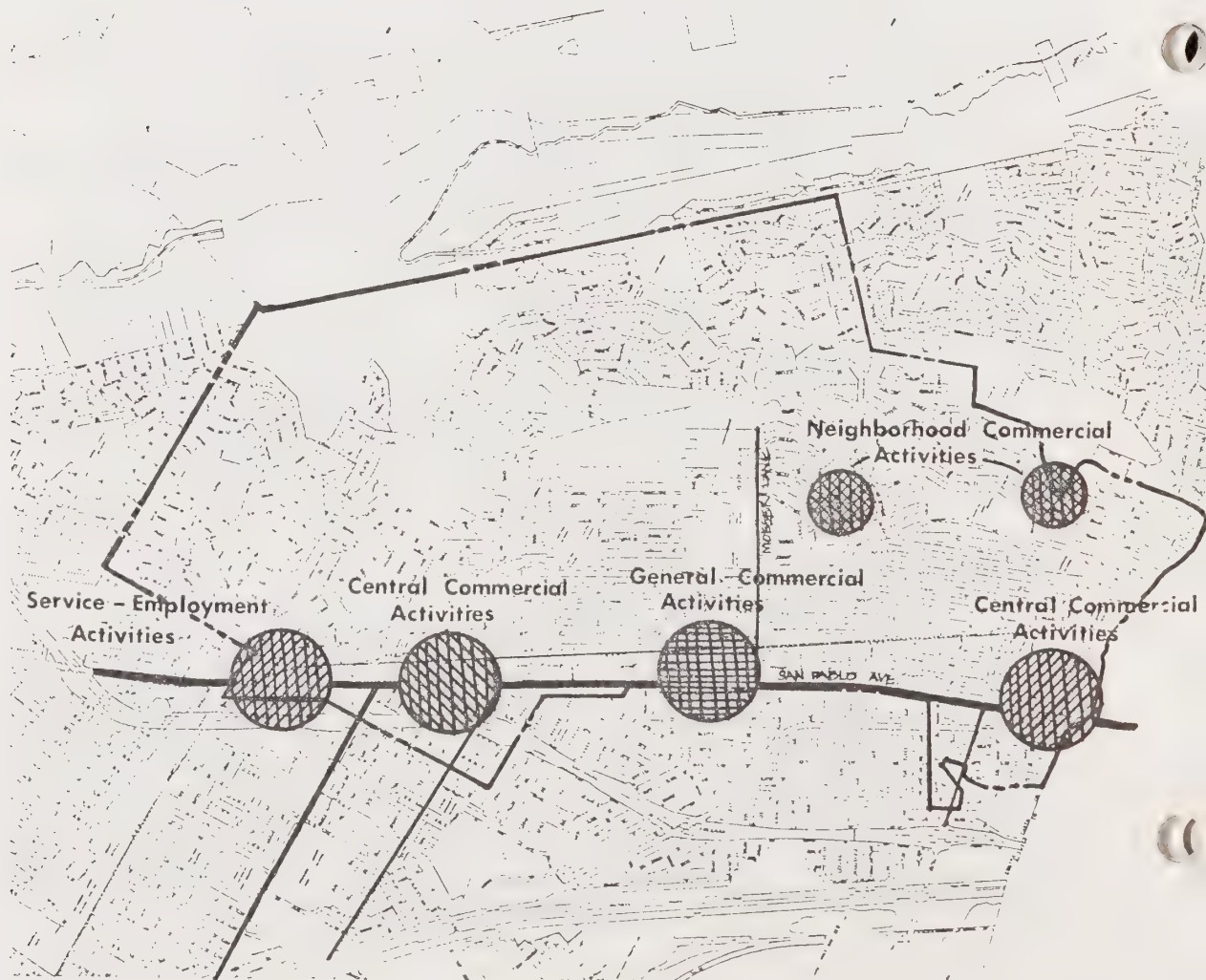
b. COMMERCIAL PROVISIONS.

Commercial uses are usually divided into specific categories and distributed on a General Plan map in specific locations. However, such categories and such a technique for designating commercial uses are often rigid and do not recognize the diversity of commercial activities that may function together well in a compatible arrangement, such as a planned development. Instead of designating specific areas for specific commercial uses, the General Plan introduces concepts of commercial activities as a broad framework for commercial development. Specific plans can be developed by special area studies which describe functional aspects of commercial activity at a micro-level. These commercial activity concepts are shown on Figure V-c and described on the following page.

FIG. V-c

**COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY:
SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM**

V-8



- 1) Central Commercial Activities. In keeping with the Design Concept of the General Plan, areas around the Plaza BART station and the Del Norte BART station are envisioned for central commercial activities with emphasis on such functions as: retail and financial uses, medical and professional offices, retail services, restaurants and compatible residential/commercial uses. The Plaza Area is envisioned as the focal point of commercial activity with a dynamic and attractive concentration of major retail and service uses. The extension of this area beyond the boundaries of the existing Shopping Center can serve to strengthen both the level of economic activity as well as the image of this area as El Cerrito's downtown. The provision of high density residential uses adjacent to this commercial area and near transportation facilities will reinforce the attraction of this area. The Del Norte Area presently includes the viable Co-op Shopping Center but contains large areas with marginal commercial uses. There is an opportunity to encourage development of this area as the secondary commercial center in the City. The presently under-utilized land is a resource that can be capitalized with specific planning tools such as community redevelopment.
- 2) General Commercial Activities. Areas of general commercial activities are envisioned for general retail and service uses. The primary focus of this concept is the concentration of typical retail stores (food, eating and drinking liquor, hardware, clothing, drugs and other types of convenience goods and personal services) located at the Moeser Lane and Food Farm Shopping Centers. This area represents "entrenched" strip commercial uses that will obviously be functioning for many years. The continuation of these uses is important in that they serve the needs of neighboring residents. Such uses are assets to the community when properly maintained, and so long as they are not joined by similar "strip commercial" uses running from one end of the Avenue to the other.
- 3) Neighboring Commercial Activities. The focus of this concept is the two established neighborhood retail centers located at Stockton and Ashbury Avenues and at Fairmount and Colusa Avenues. While these areas lack adequate off-street parking, they are stable and provide retail services at a neighborhood scale. Small neighborhood centers of this type are desirable and should, if possible, be encouraged to continue in operation. They offer a convenient, accessible local source of daily needs such as food and variety items, making a longer journey unnecessary.
- 4) Service-Employment Activities. The emphasis of this commercial concept is the provision for "heavy commercial" activities such as automotive related services, storage facilities, wholesale establishments or other uses, which involve limited manufacturing or production. Such uses should ideally be located in areas which have natural or man-made buffers to protect other commercial

or residential areas from noise or visual intrusion. The concept focuses on an area along San Pablo Avenue between Knott Avenue and the northern City Limits. Much of this area is presently vacant and under-utilized with a variety of marginal and nondescript uses along San Pablo Avenue. Well designed heavy commercial uses with special attention given to their relationship to San Pablo Avenue can create a viable heavy commercial area and unify the appearance of this portion of the City.

c. MIXED USE PROVISIONS.

Commercial (Commercial/Residential). The provision for mixed commercial/residential uses reflects the need to recognize the existing pattern of development in El Cerrito and the constraints which this places upon full development of residential or commercial concepts envisioned in the General Plan. It also recognizes that there is probably no inherent incompatibility between multi-family residential and many commercial uses. The General Plan provides the long-range conceptual framework for future development while the mixed commercial/residential use provision contained within it provides the flexibility to insure proper short range planning in the interim. Such mixed use provisions allow the City the flexibility to evaluate new development in relationship to proper transition and proper staging. The mixed commercial/residential designation also provides for compatible arrangements of such uses in planned developments.

V-10

6. CONSIDERATION OF PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the General Plan, reference has been made to the need to encourage better design of multiple-family dwellings to provide a more attractive residential image in the City and provide more amenities to residents living in them. There is a need to insure the proper relationship of the buildings to the scale of the neighborhood, street, setbacks, the provision of open space and proper orientation of parking. In areas where high density residential uses are adjacent to retail/commercial nodes, there is a need to insure a proper relationship between the different uses. If mixed residential and commercial uses are viable in selected areas, steps must be taken to insure the proper integration of such uses. It is strongly recommended that the Planning Commission consider the usage of Planned Development provisions for selected retail areas, low-density problem areas, as well as all multiple-dwelling districts (assigned after the adoption of the General Plan).

7. DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

There exist many small low-rise multi-family (4-6 units) apartments in El Cerrito which are built on small lots presenting an environment dominated by asphalt and small units with little if any livability and landscaping. Such buildings are characteristically planned with little, if any, architectural distinction. Such a visual image is not consistent with, nor does it enhance, the visual character of the City. Open Space in such units are at a premium; and when it is provided, it is not integrated into the design of the building, making it of little use. And, because the sites are small, the zoning requirements induce a similar facade for all such structures built, creating a dull and monotonous appearance. Zoning amendments or design criteria should be developed to insure that future small scale multi-family projects are more livable and attractive.

Larger apartment buildings on larger sites have a potential for providing a more varied design, greater amounts of landscaping, more usable open space, and other amenities. In view of both the rising costs of housing, which has caused family size in rental units to increase, and the fact that young families are very mobile, greater amenities should be provided in such larger scale multiple-family developments as well. Again, zoning amendments or design criteria should be developed to encourage the provision of specified amenities. Development incentives should be designed to provide a trade-off for such amenities. Also of concern is the siting of such residential structures in relationship to the street and the scale of the neighborhood. All developments must also recognize the need for safety features, such as adequate vehicle access. Since El Cerrito has a family-oriented lifestyle with family-oriented homes, such structures must be designed to harmonize with the visual character of such family neighborhoods, to allow better transition so that the building does not dominate the landscape.

Commercial facilities in El Cerrito are also of great concern. Because appearance and the provision of adequate amenities is so important to the commercial environment and well being of the City, attention must be given to proper siting and other relationships.

Because there exists a vacuum between development control and actual design of a facility, regardless of whether it is residential or commercial, there is a need for a framework of development criteria to help insure the proper relationships of design between land uses and to provide guidance for design review of new development.

The development criteria listed in Appendix E are designed as a broad framework for developing more specific design criteria and standards at the Design Review level.

B. PUBLIC FACILITIES

1. INTRODUCTION

The California law providing for a city's general plan specifies that said plan may include "a public services and facilities element" and "a public building element". The former element may refer to rights-of-way, easements and facilities for sewerage, refuse disposal, drainage and local utilities, while the second element may cover locations and arrangements of civic and community centers, public schools, libraries, police and fire stations, and other public buildings, including architecture and landscape treatment. The Public Facilities Map should be referred to for the following discussion of public facilities.

V-13

2. CITY HALL

One public building which this element should consider is a new City Hall. The existing building is inadequate in size and in operating systems and layout. Further, it has been declared to be "an earthquake hazard to both life and property" as a result of the style of construction and the building's age. Inasmuch as the City's Seismic Safety Element has emphasized the importance of the City Hall, containing vital governmental functions, in coordinating disaster relief activities and post-disaster planning, a new building of earthquake resistant construction should be a priority item.

As anticipated when the present public safety building was constructed in 1960 and as recommended in the 1967 General Plan, a new building for city offices would be most favorably located next to the public safety building. This would provide the most efficient location and, further, by forming a civic center, the public buildings could stimulate new private development.

3. FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION

El Cerrito has three fire houses; in addition to the main station in the public safety building, there is one on Arlington Boulevard and one at Eureka and Ashbury. The Seismic Safety Element points out that the Arlington firehouse is undersized for adequate usage and is located on the Hayward fault so that it might be rendered

inoperative in the event of an earthquake along that fault. The Eureka-Ashbury firehouse was once considered for elimination. Opposition to this phasing-out from area residents (many of whom are older citizens who are reassured by the presence of rescue equipment at the station) has resulted in its continued operation. Joint operation of fire-fighting units in El Cerrito and neighboring jurisdictions, especially Kensington and Albany, might result in some reorganization of the fire service.

The police department operates from the public safety building. It is anticipated that its facilities will remain in that building for the foreseeable future; however, additional space may be required.

4. SCHOOLS

Unlike school buildings in many cities in the Bay Area, all public schools in the City have been built since 1933 and meet the standards of the Field Act. Further, all private schools have also been built since that date and meet the standards of the Riley Act which govern those facilities. Therefore, officials of the Richmond Unified School District or of the private schools' governing bodies do not find themselves faced with the necessity for closing local school buildings. However, findings in connection with the Seismic Safety Study call for a detailed review by the school district of those schools on or near faults, with special attention to foundation materials.

Since the school enrollments throughout the region have shown a decline in the past few years, a trend expected by local school officials to affect schools in the City for the next five to seven years, there are no plans for new school buildings or additions to existing ones.

If, as is a goal of the housing and land use elements, families are attracted to the City as turnover occurs in local residences, in a few years enrollments may stabilize or even increase; given the present declines from capacity, however, this will not call for immediate increases in school buildings.

5. PARKS AND RECREATION

The City presently has eleven developed neighborhood parks and 165 acres of City-owned undeveloped open space known as Hillside Park. A Linear Park for biking and hiking along the BART track has also been developed. A community center and swim complex was completed in 1967.

Three of the neighborhood parks are located adjacent to elementary schools; all the schools in the community are also available for community groups to use facilities for recreation or meetings. Six of the neighborhood parks have clubhouses for City recreation programs and community group uses. Presently, there are 15 tennis courts in the City with plans for two additional courts in the future.

In addition to parks and facilities operated by the City, the City leases a building and land to a private non-profit organization for a community theatre.

Additional information regarding parks, recreation facilities, and open space and bike paths will be the subject of a Parks and Recreation Element now being considered by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

6. LIBRARY SERVICES

V-15

El Cerrito contains a branch of the Contra Costa County Library. The City is responsible for provision of the structure while the County has responsibility for providing and maintaining library service. A major addition and remodeling occurred in 1960. A stabilization in both area population and library circulation does not indicate a necessity for expansion of this facility in the foreseeable future.

7. UTILITIES

As far as most of the equipment, lines and other facilities of the utilities within El Cerrito are concerned, these are adequate at the present time and little change is expected since the City anticipates rather limited growth. PG&E is planning a major line addition connecting the substation on Portola Drive with a substation in Berkeley. This will be undergrounded.

Undergrounding of all utility lines is one change which is occurring in the City. Undergrounding of San Pablo Avenue lines has been accomplished and, since this is required for all new subdivisions, several smaller areas have utilities undergrounded. For the remainder of the City, the change will probably proceed slowly except in those areas where property owners are willing to finance the undergrounding or share with the City in financing or in areas of future development or street widening.

A goal of this plan is the development of recreational or open space facilities which could utilize the right-of-way under the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's transmission lines. Such planning should also consider the possible undergrounding of these lines at a future date.

8. SEWERAGE

One system which does present problems in meeting current and future needs is the sanitary sewer. The problem is actually two-fold: the sewer lines in the Stege Sanitary District are some fifty years old and are 6-inch lines rather than the 8-inch or larger lines specified now as a minimum standard; and during the rainy season the sewer system is subject to excessive infiltration with storm water.

Under the present system, the Point Isabel sewer treatment plant operates whenever the daily flow exceeds 14 million gallons; this occurs only during the rainy season and the Point Isabel plant essentially treats storm water (more accurately, very diluted sewage). At other times the flow is carried past Point Isabel to the EBMUD plant in Oakland.

The small lines and the infiltration will have a limiting effect on the construction of higher density residential development until these deficiencies are corrected.

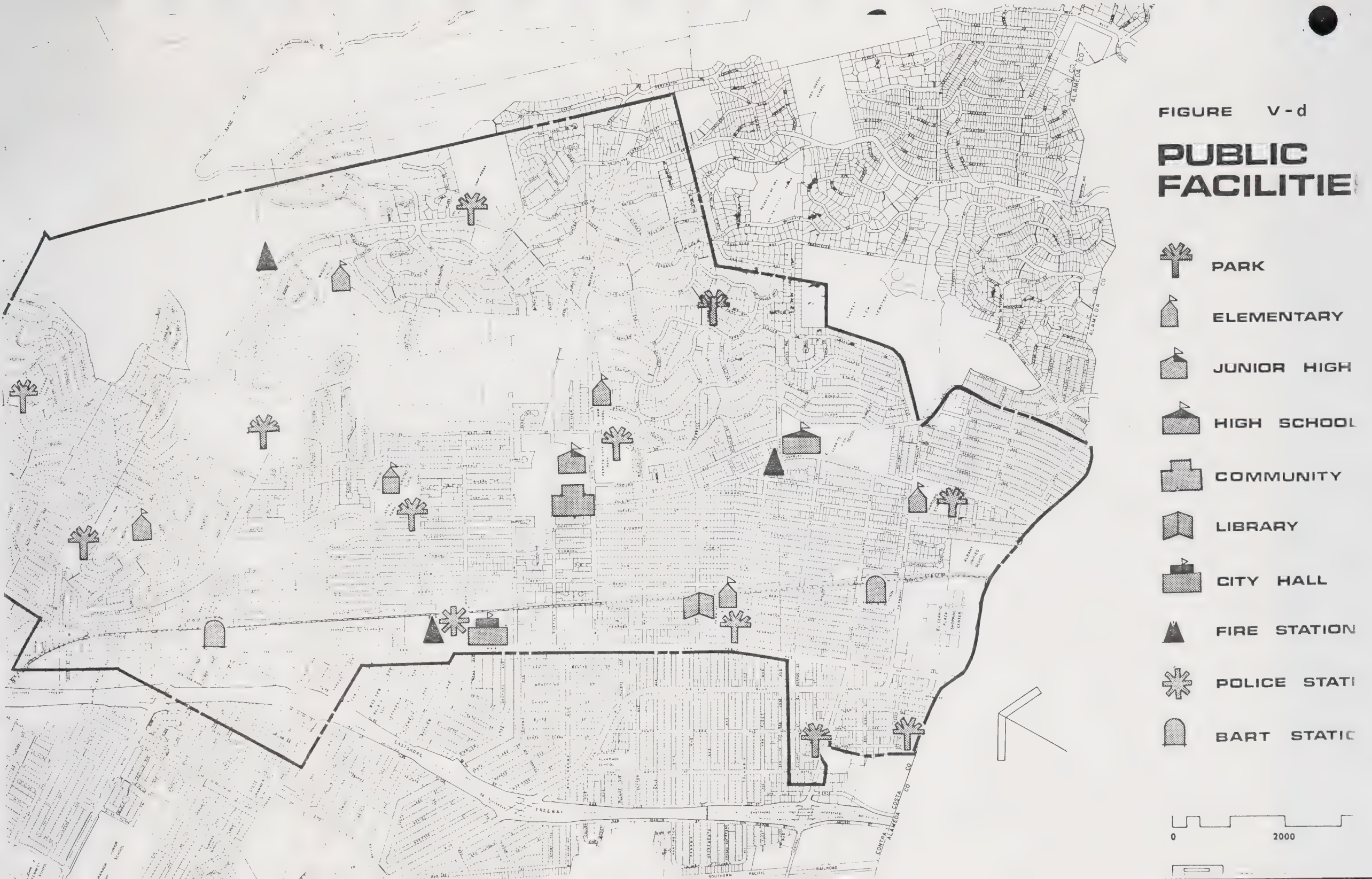
The Stege District is included in the East Bay Municipal Utility District; a study is now being proposed for the latter district so that the severity of the problem (that is, the adequacy of the present system) can be measured; thereafter, the necessary steps suggested for expanding the system capacity can be taken. A study concerning the reorganization of Stege Sanitary District function should be encouraged.

9. BART

The Bay Area Rapid Transit District is covered under Section III-A-6 on page III-8.

FIGURE V-d

PUBLIC FACILITIES





C. HOUSING

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1967 the California Legislature amended the California Planning Act to require that a Housing Element be prepared as part of every city and county General Plan. Furthermore, the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development requires a housing element as well as a valid General Plan as a prerequisite for receiving federal aid in Federal Planning Assistance Program. Federal guidelines for housing elements closely parallel the state requirements which mandate

"a housing element consisting of standards and plans for the improvement of housing and for provision of adequate sites for housing. This element of the plan shall make adequate provision for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community."

V-19

The intent of the California Legislation is to provide direction and assistance in the fulfillment of the broad national goal of providing a decent, safe, sanitary and affordable home and living environment for every American.

2. GOALS AND POLICIES

The purpose of the housing element is to establish goals and policies intended to improve the overall housing situation in El Cerrito. El Cerrito is essentially a residential community with primarily family-oriented residences. Inasmuch as this pattern of family-oriented homes is reinforced by the provision of generously scaled schools and parks, and protected from heavy traffic movements by a community-oriented circulation system, the housing element is also intended to promote and enhance the family-oriented, neighborhood lifestyle of the City. The element will provide a framework for encouraging the maintenance of existing stable neighborhoods for family living and to preserve and enhance the residential character of El Cerrito.

The following are the goals of the El Cerrito Housing Element as formed by the City Council on the basis of information contained in the Residential Analysis and with suggestions and recommendations originating with private citizens and public groups:

1. To promote the provision of adequate housing for all persons regardless of income, age, race or ethnic background.
2. To promote the provision of housing selection, by location, type, price and tenure.
3. To promote open and free choice of housing for all.
4. To provide guidelines to help insure orderly residential development in the City.
5. To promote and enhance the family-oriented lifestyle of the community by maintaining high standards of quality for all residential development.
6. To promote the development of new housing only when it is in harmony with the natural environment.

In order to work toward these goals, the City should subscribe to the following policies:

V-20

- A. The creation of better housing and living conditions in the City by encouraging the maintenance of existing housing stock and preserving existing neighborhoods for family living.
- B. The regulation of residential development in areas where hazards to life and property exist, consistent with the policies of the Seismic Safety Element.
- C. The preservation of the amenities and identities of the residential neighborhoods in the City since the developable land of the City is very limited and the character of its neighborhoods is established with a variety of housing types.
- D. The encouragement of housing mixed with shopping and service centers in the vicinity of the two major transportation nodes.
- E. The careful calculation and control of the impact of higher density multi-unit apartment structures when it becomes demonstrable that there is sufficient economic support for such housing in the City.
- F. The undertaking of a comprehensive study to outline the housing needs of the City and encourage housing types to meet those needs.
- G. The support of methods to maintain and expand housing opportunities for the elderly, who need less costly housing.

3. PRESENT CONDITIONS

In order to determine the weaknesses and strengths of El Cerrito's housing program, it is necessary to evaluate the residential areas and present housing supply in relationship to the goals of the Housing Element. Such an evaluation will serve to introduce future directions for action so that adopted programs will retain and strengthen those aspects of the City's population and housing which are desirable, and remedy those problems which the City has the capacity to solve either on its own or in cooperation with other governmental agencies in improving the housing and related environment.

The background reports for the General Plan have identified and analyzed the 10 neighborhoods in the City. These neighborhoods (shown in Figure V-e) follow the boundaries of the City's 10 Census tracts which were created by consideration of natural or manmade boundaries, population, and circulation. These ten neighborhoods serve as the basis for developing the following descriptions of El Cerrito's present housing conditions. A detailed analysis of each neighborhood is contained in the Residential Analysis of El Cerrito.

a. SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION.

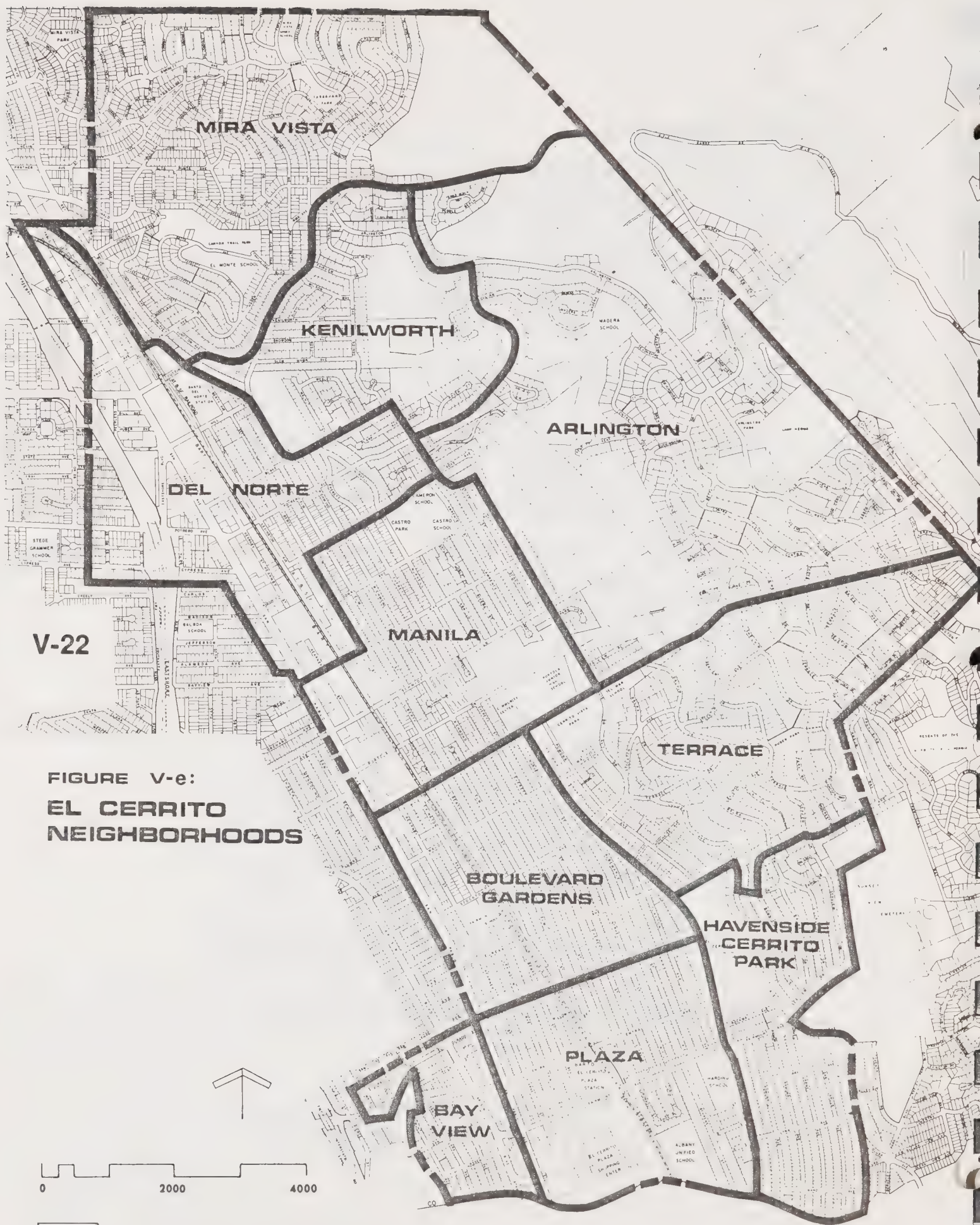
Less than half of El Cerrito families have children under 18 (46 percent). (see Appendix A-7) Correspondingly, just over a quarter, 27 percent, of the City's population is under 18, compared to 30 percent for the metropolitan area (SMSA) and well over a third (36 percent) for the county. However, the City has a slightly lower ratio of families with a female head. One-third of the 1970 population was classified as of foreign stock (foreign born or of foreign parentage), a higher ratio than for the cosmopolitan San Francisco-Oakland area. However, there is no predominance of any one nationality group reported in the City. This is one population characteristic which shows little variation from neighborhood to neighborhood.

The City's 14 percent of non-White population falls midway between the 17 percent for the area and 10 percent for the County. This is concentrated more among "other races" (primarily Oriental) in the City (over 8 percent) and less among Black (not quite 6 percent) than for the metropolitan area as a whole.

Consistent with the higher percentage of single-family homes, owner occupancy, and older families, the stability of the City population ranks well above that for the metropolitan area or county; 58 percent of residents in the City resided in the same house in 1970 as in 1965, and 12 percent of 1970 residents had moved into their units before 1950.

b. CHANGES IN THE HOUSING SUPPLY.

El Cerrito experienced its sharpest rate of growth between 1940 and 1950. Construction continued at a high rate through the 1950's



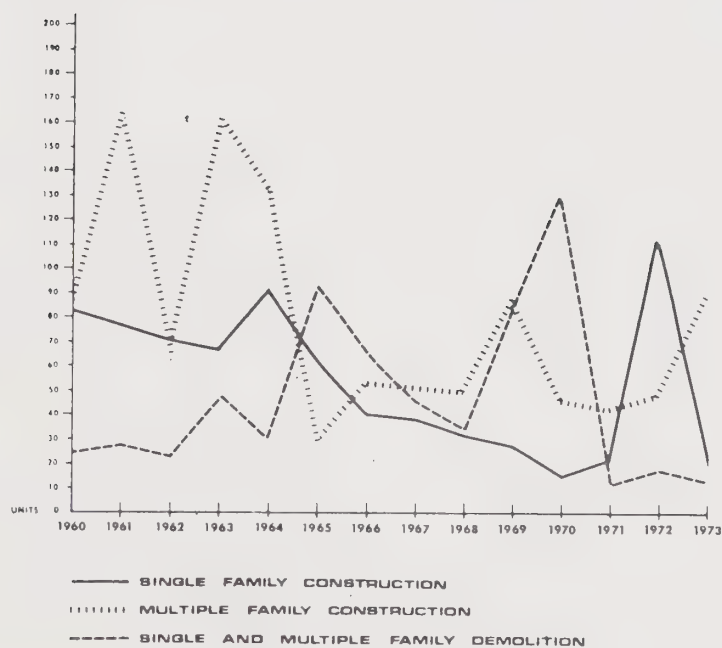
**FIGURE V-e:
EL CERRITO
NEIGHBORHOODS**

until no large areas remained to be developed and the City had reached a stable level with well-defined neighborhoods. Figure V-f presents a graph of City construction of single-family units and multi-family units since 1960 including demolitions. The graph shows that while in certain years between 1960 and 1974, single-family construction outnumbered multi-family construction, both multi-family and single-family follow the same ups and downs of construction throughout the years with multi-family construction showing a greater proportion of units constructed for the entire period. This trend is likely to continue since vacant land for new single-family construction is very limited.

FIGURE V-f:

CITY OF EL CERRITO HOUSING: CONSTRUCTION & DEMOLITION

V-23



Source: El Cerrito Department of Public Works, 1974

c. OWNER-RENTERS.

The 1970 Census counted 9251 housing units within the City of El Cerrito with 81 percent single-family structures. Approximately 70 percent of the total housing units were owner-occupied, the remainder occupied by renters. There has been a shift toward more renter-occupied units in the City over the last decade (from 23 to 30 percent), reflecting the general trend toward apartment construction.

Consistent with the higher percentage of single-family homes and owner occupancy, the stability of the City population ranks well above that for the metropolitan area or county.

d. VACANCY.

El Cerrito, in 1970, had one of the lowest vacancy rates in Contra Costa County. The total vacancy rate was 1.7 percent and the home-owner vacancy rate in the City only 0.6 percent, both much lower than the 3-4 percent vacancy factor often considered necessary for intercity mobility in choice of housing.

Within El Cerrito, little vacant land is left for development and the City's physical amenities of varied topography, high quality housing, and family-oriented lifestyle make El Cerrito a very desirable place to live.

e. SIZE OF UNITS.

The median size for housing units in the City is 5.1 rooms, substantially above the 4.7 rooms median for the metropolitan area but just below the 5.2 rooms for this county. Nearly a third of the units are four rooms or less; a number of these are apartments but some of the older single-family homes especially in the southern part of the City are also small. The homes with 7 or more rooms are concentrated in the hills in the eastern and northern neighborhoods.

f. HOUSEHOLD SIZE.

The household size in El Cerrito is 2.76 persons, slightly smaller than the metropolitan area's median of 2.79 and substantially smaller than the County's 3.19. El Cerrito's overall household size has decreased since 1960 when the household size was 3.0 persons. This is due primarily to the trend toward older families in El Cerrito and a reduced birth rate.

g. CONDITION.

Although the 1970 Census does not attempt to judge the condition of units, the lack of plumbing facilities and overcrowding are both enumerated and are used as indicators of substandard living conditions. Census information and an analysis of it done by the Association of Bay Area Governments bear out the fact that the overall quality of housing is unusually high in El Cerrito.

In the ABAG study covering rental units, 36 were found to be lacking some or all plumbing facilities; these were all in the smallest units, those with no separate bedroom. In addition, 121 units were considered to have substandard heating equipment.* None of the rental units was overcrowded.

Among owner-occupied units, the ABAG study found 25 units lacking some or all plumbing facilities and 48 with substandard heating. In this category 154 units were classed as overcrowded (with 1.01 or more persons per room). **

h. VALUES AND RENTS.

There is a wide range of owner-occupied homes in the City. The median value of owner-occupied homes in El Cerrito as of 1970 is \$28,000 which exceeds both the metropolitan area and county medians. Only 14 percent of the homes are valued under \$20,000 and only six percent at \$50,000 or more. One-quarter are in the range from \$20,000 to \$24,999 and the largest group, 36 percent, are in the range from \$25,000 to \$35,999. (Information is from 1970 Census; for fuller discussion, see Residential Analysis.)

The medium gross rent of rental units was \$154 per month. Forty-two percent of the rental units in the City were in the \$150-199 range with about 34 percent in the \$100-149 range.

A great proportion of households with head under 30 years of age and those households whose head is 65 years or older occupy older housing units, a greater proportion of older units command less rent, and a higher proportion of young households and households age 65 and over have a lower family income than households in all other age categories. Households age 65 and over and the category "primary individuals", (which contain many elderly single persons), have less income than the young households. It would appear that older housing units are a resource for households with smaller incomes. (see Appendix A-8,9,10)

i. HOUSING PATTERNS.

Typically young families tend to rent living units rather than to purchase their housing. There are several reasons for this. Young

* defined as including room heaters without flue, fireplaces, stoves or portable room heaters, not heated.

** using a maximum of one person per room as a standard, a four room home consisting of a living room, kitchen, and two bedrooms would be overcrowded if the home were occupied by more than four persons.

families often require less space, have fewer financial resources necessary to buy, and desire to stay more mobile until their occupations stabilize. Most young families in El Cerrito (head of the family under 30 years old, husband and wife both present) do rent.

As families mature, homeownership increases. Families with a head of household between the age of 30 and 64 are predominantly homeowners. Such households also tend to have larger families and higher incomes than younger families. (see Figure V-g)

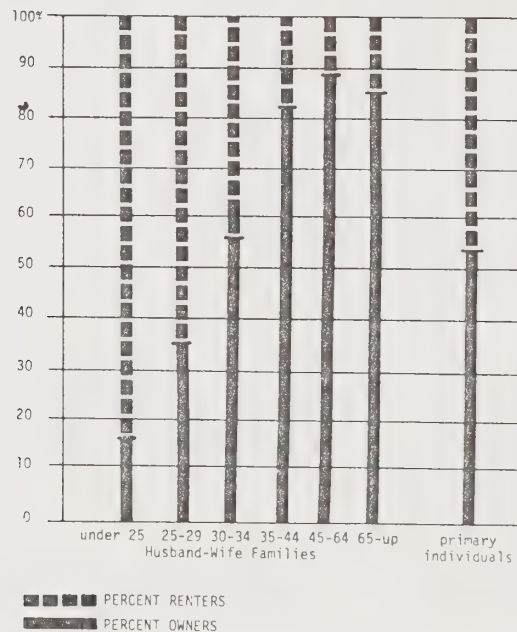
Households over the age of 65 in El Cerrito continue, for the most part, to occupy their own homes as long as they can afford taxes and minimal maintenance. Such persons living on fixed incomes often cannot afford to buy other homes or rent apartments if they gave up their present homes.

Primary individuals are mostly single persons living alone. There is a greater number of such residents who own their homes than rent since many of these are elderly persons continuing to reside in the family homes.

V-26

FIGURE V-g:

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD BY AGE AND TENURE



Source: U. S. Census, 1970

4. POSITIVE ASPECTS OF HOUSING IN EL CERRITO

As emphasized in the Residential Analysis, El Cerrito's housing situation as of 1970 is desirable and consistent with the goals of the Housing Element in the following aspects:

- a) El Cerrito provides housing for a wide variety of income groups. 126 families have incomes less than \$2,000 per year; 80 families have incomes over \$50,000. The median income for all families is \$13,358; the median for unrelated individuals (single-person household or persons living with non-relatives) is \$5,295. In addition to nearly 1,300 families receiving Social Security income, 299 families received public assistance or public welfare.
- b) El Cerrito provides housing for all age groups. Although the age of the City is such that the cycle of housing currently has resulted in above average numbers in the 45-64, 55-64 and 65 and over age groups, there are also young people and young families moving into every neighborhood.
- c) El Cerrito provides housing for persons of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. It has 14 percent non-White, composed of 8 percent Oriental and 6 percent Negro. Over 7 percent is Spanish-American and an unusually high percentage -- 32 -- is either foreign born or of foreign parentage, representing many other countries and continents.
- d) El Cerrito contains housing of varying types. Single-family structures vary from small bungalows to spacious 2-stories. Multi-family units include duplexes and apartment buildings with more than 30 units. The absence of really large apartment structures, over 50 units, is not surprising since El Cerrito does not have any large employment centers. To date there has been little interest expressed in such large projects by possible developers. In unit size, houses and apartments range from 1 room to 9 or more rooms.
- e) In price, most of the owner-occupied homes fall in the moderate price range, from \$20,000 to \$35,000 (as of 1970). For renters also, most housing units fall in the middle range, \$100 to \$200 per month, gross rent. Further, there are units in every value and rental category, including the below \$5,000 value for owner-occupied and the under \$30 contract rent category. However, it is recognized that few units exist in the lowest ranges and prices are increasing.

- V-28
- f) Some 2,500 units, or 30 percent of all housing units, are occupied by renters. If multi-unit structures replace single-family houses, the ratio of renters will increase. However, since homeownership is desired by the majority of citizens, at least at certain periods in their lives, and homeownership for all those desiring it is considered a worthwhile goal by federal and state and well as City officials, it is in the best interests of the City to maintain a high level of ownership.
 - g) The general maintenance level of housing units in most sectors of the City is very high. Although in some instances structures may be deteriorating and their appearance detrimental to their immediate surroundings, such cases are as yet too few to seriously affect most of the City's residential neighborhoods, which are otherwise characterized by well maintained houses and yards.
 - h) El Cerrito has an exceptionally stable population. In addition to providing a large base of residents who are interested in their community this also is partially responsible for the high maintenance of housing units, active participation in social and professional groups and a degree of loyalty to City businesses.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROBLEM AREAS

Along with the positive aspect of El Cerrito's housing there are certain weak points in the current housing situation which could develop into problems if no steps are taken to counteract unwanted trends. These potential problems should be recognized and possible courses of action recommended.

- a) Housing Conservation. The City contains little vacant buildable land on which new single-family housing units may be built. Although the City presently has a good stock of housing, the situation mentioned will result in an increasing age for the average housing unit within the City since no substantial number of new single-family dwellings will be built. Much of the City's housing stock is presently old by area standards.

The median age for housing units in El Cerrito is 18 years, compared to 21 years for the metropolitan area and 14 years for Contra Costa County (all 1970 figures). Sixteen percent were built before 1940 and nearly 50 percent were built before 1950. In ten years' time, 28.8 percent of the City's housing stock built during the 1940's will turn 35 years or older, which means many homes may need replacement, if not major maintenance by 1990.

The replacement of older housing units in El Cerrito could eliminate a valuable resource of less costly housing for households living on small incomes such as young families and older residents.

The longevity of a wood frame unit is determined by many factors including the quality of construction and most importantly, the level of maintenance it receives during its lifetime. Careful maintenance will extend a dwelling's lifetime significantly. While the level of maintenance in El Cerrito is unusually high, the City should initiate a program to determine the extent to which dwelling units in El Cerrito will require conservation measures to conserve its high quality of housing.

- b) Rising Housing Costs. Increase demand influenced by rising construction costs is producing higher costs for El Cerrito housing, both in selling prices and rental rates. Although the City lacks means to control either the demand for housing in the region or the spiraling costs of housing construction, it should do what it can to keep down housing costs. In order to relieve pressure on residential property taxes, alternative revenues should be maintained and new sources encouraged. The City should also fully cooperate with other governmental agencies in housing studies aimed at seeking solutions to the high cost of housing.

Success in this area will aid in attracting young families and also assist older residents to remain in their homes.

V-29

- c) Maintain Neighborhood Stability. The stable, family-oriented housing character of many El Cerrito neighborhoods should be protected from the intrusion of incompatible land uses and buildings. Therefore, special consideration is given to the distribution of multi-family areas in the Land Use Element. Further, the Design Review process should be strengthened by the development and maintenance of a design review administration framework for implementation. The design review process would also be strengthened by an expanded Planned Development Ordinance which would allow greater flexibility and control for multi-family and other large-scale projects.
- d) The Needs of the Elderly. Along with the spiraling costs of new housing, increases in taxes due to home improvements and inflation may force many elderly families to leave their homes. This problem is not one which is limited to El Cerrito but is nationwide. The elderly are an important segment of the community and their housing needs should be recognized. The City can support tax relief legislation with special consideration of deductions for homeowners making improvements under a housing conservation program. This type of legislation would not only lessen the problem but maintain the quality of housing in El Cerrito.

While such legislation may help many elderly, many older individuals may require specially designed housing for older families. This is a need reflected in many communities - a need which El

Cerrito has recognized. In 1973 the City Council appointed a Citizens Committee on Aging to both study the needs of the elderly in the City and to give elderly residents greater input in community decisions. Among the many subcommittees of this group is one which is studying housing needs of the elderly in El Cerrito. The City should continue the support of this Committee and encourage their input into this problem area. If the housing problem is critical, the City should investigate methods of securing specially designed housing for the elderly. An attempt to accomplish this is contained in the Special Density Exemption.

- e) Maintenance of Data. In order to keep abreast of citywide trends and aid in the continuing management of the housing program, a continuing information management system should be established to identify gaps and deficiencies in the present housing information system. Procedures in assembling and reporting of housing and related data should be modified and expanded so that housing information is more useful and readily accessible.
- f) Annual Review. The Housing Element should be reviewed annually to assess progress toward the goals, and also to analyze changing conditions. California law also calls for a biennial update. Citizen participation should be encouraged for both programs.

V-30

6. OBSTACLES

El Cerrito cooperates with other governmental units and agencies in seeking to meet the housing needs of the area as a whole and to seek solutions to bring downward pressures on prices. However, the obstacles toward improving the housing situation in El Cerrito are very apparent. The overall shortage of housing in conjunction with prevailing high costs of construction is not conducive to stabilizing housing prices. In such an atmosphere, the supply side of the market is currently responding to the higher-income demand sectors providing medium and higher-priced owner and rental units. Since El Cerrito has little vacant land available for new housing, the demand for housing will keep the vacancy rate very low and inflate the cost of existing housing in the City.

7. FUTURE PROSPECTS

The City of El Cerrito must conserve its high quality housing as well as meet the special needs of the community. This will require determined and systematic efforts to insure that the City's stock and environment are not allowed to deteriorate. City residents, who have displayed their interest and concern, and City officials, must continue to seek new concepts and to follow through on these so that neighborhoods and the entire City continue to provide the type of environment that supports a stable population, loyal citizens, and involved civic participants.

D. COMMUNITY DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

1. INTRODUCTION

This element of the General Plan is intended to recognize the importance of El Cerrito's visual environment to the quality of life in the City. Specifically, it is the goal of this section to:

- Promote enhancement of the community's identity.
- Promote an aesthetic as well as cohesive environment that results in healthy living and working conditions for all residents.
- To protect and enhance property values and the economy in the City through preservation and adding to its attractiveness.
- To encourage enhancement of individual pride in community appearance.

V-31

2. URBAN DESIGN

Urban Design is the imaginative creation of spatial and temporal patterns of human activity and its physical setting which considers economic, social, health, safety and psychological effects as well as appearance. It is a process used to articulate those special elements in the community which define its identity and enhance its attractiveness. A community which achieves both a well designed and functional plan is dependent upon a strong effective urban design program.

At present El Cerrito has no citywide urban design framework beyond a design concept for San Pablo Avenue. When an urban design plan is developed for San Pablo Avenue, such a citywide urban design framework should be developed and integrated with that of San Pablo Avenue giving special attention to the visual form of the City in order to relate land use and circulation with community appearance.

3. COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

The following list describes possible courses of action which might be taken to help improve community appearance within any urban design context:

- a. Major Entrances to El Cerrito. Major entrances to the City give both the resident as well as visitor a prelude to what can be expected when the destination is reached within the City. Such entrances include the two rapid transit stations as well as Central, Potrero, Carlson, Cutting, Arlington, Ashbury, Colusa and San Pablo Avenues.

Entrances to the City are showcases to the community and should reflect the City's quality of community design and community pride as well as land use planning. Special urban design treatment should be developed to protect and enhance these visually prominent areas.

- b. Beautification and Landscape Maintenance. Poor maintenance of property is both a liability to the community as well as to the individual property owner. A voluntary beautification program with intensive citizen involvement can be developed to promote a beautification program in El Cerrito with a program of public recognition, awards for those property owners who voluntarily improve or enhance the attractiveness of their property. Such a program could be implemented through the Chamber of Commerce or through local groups such as the Boy Scouts.

- c. Street Tree Planting. El Cerrito is an attractive residential community with attractive physical amenities. Such a character should be preserved and enhanced to strengthen the visual amenities in the community. Street trees and roadway landscaping are a very important element in the appearance of the community besides adding to the aesthetic quality of such improvements. Since street trees add a feeling of permanence reflecting the stability and values of the community, special emphasis should be given to implementation of El Cerrito's Street Tree Master Plan.

Presently the City has a program by which individual property owners can have a street tree planted by the City with the property owner assessed a nominal fee for the cost of the tree. The trees are then maintained by the City. This program should be promoted and encouraged as part of any citywide beautification program.

- d. Undergrounding of Overhead Utilities. Of visual prominence in the City is the proliferation of overhead utility wires and structures which distract from the attractiveness of neighborhood areas. The City has already undergrounded the utilities in approximately 10 miles of streets including San Pablo Avenue. While this beginning is significant, there remains many more miles of streets which require undergrounding. Present utilities must be underground for all new subdivisions in the City. Efforts should be made to do the same in other parts of the community except where such an action would be financially unfeasible.

- e. Sign Control. In 1970 El Cerrito adopted a Sign Ordinance intended to reduce the clutter and confusion that exists in parts of the City's streetscape and to enhance the commercial environment of the City. The success of such an ordinance depends upon strong municipal and community support. The Planning Commission and City Council should continue to uphold vigorously the provisions of El Cerrito's Sign Ordinance.
- f. Design Review. El Cerrito established by Ordinance, a Design Review process in 1968. Since that time the Design Review Board has performed an outstanding job of insuring that development in the City is architecturally pleasing and compatible with the existing scale of development. The City should continue support of a vigorous design review process in El Cerrito to help insure quality development in the City. A strong administrative framework should also be developed to help insure continuity as well as effective implementation. In addition, a community design award program might be established to promote quality design as well as instill a greater awareness of and support for Design Review in El Cerrito.
- g. Historical Preservation. The preservation of historical landmarks can have both significant educational and cultural benefits to the community by being a "window to the past". Such preservation can also have a favorable impact upon the City's visual environment. To date there is only one historical landmark in the City - the site of the El Rancho Adobe at El Cerrito Plaza. No buildings have yet been historically preserved or recognized as having historical significance in the City. The future of historical preservation in El Cerrito is dependent both upon the role and involvement of municipal government and the local citizenry in creating an historical preservation process in the City.

In 1974 the El Cerrito Historical Society was created to investigate the historical preservation potential in El Cerrito and to assess the benefits of such a program in the City. If such a program is viable, the City should interest the community in carrying out the activities of preserving historical landmarks or buildings in El Cerrito.

E. PARKS AND RECREATION

1. INTRODUCTION

The El Cerrito Parks and Recreation Commission and staff in October 1974 began researching the necessary information for the preparation of a Parks and Recreation Element to be included in the City's new General Plan. This was in response to the decision of the El Cerrito City Council that a plan should be prepared before funds from the "State Beach, Parks, Recreational and Historical Facilities Bond Act of 1974" were allocated to projects for improvements to park and recreation facilities.

In addition to the 1974 Bond monies, El Cerrito is eligible for funding under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Program initially adopted in 1965 provides 50% matching funds for local agencies through the State for acquisition and development of outdoor recreational land. Presently, a bill is before the State Legislature for 100% funding of recreational land and facilities in urban areas from off shore drilling taxes. In addition, a state legislature program for hiking and bicycle trails is being considered in Sacramento. Most of these fund sources require a Parks and Recreation Element or Master Plan before application will be accepted.

In August 1975 an Analysis of the El Cerrito Parks and Recreation System was completed by the Parks and Recreation Commission and staff as background information for the element. The Analysis was distributed to the City Council and Commissions, the Parks and Recreation staff and interested residents. In October a community workshop was held to discuss the future parks and recreation services and facilities and to set priorities on projects to be carried out using the 1974 Bond monies and any further funds that might become available. The public input obtained at the community workshop has been incorporated into the Parks and Recreation Plan.

The Plan is long range, concerned with the next 10-15 years of the Parks and Recreation System. It should be the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Commission to update and revise this Plan as the needs of the community change. From this specific Plan, the policies have been excerpted for incorporation as the Parks and Recreation Element for this General Plan.

2. GOALS

The goals of the El Cerrito Parks and Recreation System in preparing this Element and the more comprehensive Plan are:

- a. Leisure Services: to provide opportunities for all residents to participate in recreational activities regardless of age, sex, ethnic background or economic status.
- b. Special Services: to provide programs and social services for older adults and handicapped people.
- c. Open Space: to provide and manage open space for the use and enjoyment of the community which includes protecting natural areas from overuse and abusive recreation.
- d. Community Appearance: to enhance the appearance of the City through the improvement and maintenance of parks, street trees and street median landscaping and to accomplish these goals without detracting from the quiet and aesthetics of residential neighborhoods and natural areas.
- e. Quality of Life: to enhance the quality of life in El Cerrito by contributing to the physical and mental well being of all its residents by preservation and improvement of the natural environment, including spaciousness, sunlight, flora and fauna.

3. POLICIES

The following policies are intended to provide a framework for planning the Parks and Recreation System in order to meet its goals effectively over the next 10 to 15 years:

- a. Public opinion should be regularly sought through various medias, including public hearings and surveys in order to measure the responsiveness and effectiveness of the Parks and Recreation System.
- b. Maximum benefit should be obtained from existing facilities, which may require lighting outdoor facilities where appropriate and providing sufficient indoor space at neighborhood parks.

- c. Recreational lands should be protected by zoning regulations from diversion to non-recreational purposes.
- d. Greater cooperation with other agencies should be encouraged to reduce duplication of services and facilitate exchange of beneficial services:
 - 1) Promote working relationships between the Richmond Unified School District and the City to achieve maximum use of school facilities.
 - 2) Meet with staff and commissions of Albany to consider overlapping policies concerning the BART Linear Park and Cougar Field, Creekside Park, and non-resident demands on El Cerrito's facilities, services and programs.
 - 3) Promote joint meetings with commissioners and staff of other neighboring cities on mutual concerns; e.g., City of Richmond on BART Linear Park, Central Park, and utilization of Santa Fe right-of-way.
 - 4) Explore the possibility of using other public or semi-public facilities for additional indoor space.
 - 5) Encourage the continuation of Mira Vista Golf Club, Cougar Field and the Boy Scouts' Camp Herms because of their contribution not only to active recreation space but also the aesthetics of the community.
- e. Whenever possible, facilities should be located adjacent to schools or other public facilities to supplement physical education facilities and ensure maximum use.
- f. In cases where use of El Cerrito facilities by non-residents could result in restriction of use by residents, the possibilities of using "residents first" or "residents only" policies or of charging substantially more to non-residents should be pursued.
- g. The use of volunteers to provide direct recreational and human services should be encouraged to involve the community in their Parks and Recreation System and maximize the financial resources of the City.
- h. The standards established by nationally recognized organizations, such as the National Recreation and Park Association, should be recognized where applicable in determining service and program needs for all City residents.

VI IMPLEMENTATION

A. INTRODUCTION

The successful implementation of a General Plan is generally the most difficult phase of the entire planning process and requires sustained support and impetus. Coordination and consistency are keys to implementation. Not only must public improvements be coordinated with General Plan policies, but so must the improvements of other governmental agencies and of private development. The General Plan should be the major consideration in the design of all development in El Cerrito. Leadership is necessary to help insure that a consistency in planning is achieved. Policies have little impact if these are constantly changed without implementation. A workable balance between consistency and flexibility must be developed.

Plan implementation begins with official recognition and adoption of the General Plan itself. Beyond this benchmark, a strategy must be developed to provide a systematic and comprehensive process to initiate implementation of the Plan. The following is such a strategy:

- . Special problem areas and needed projects (both legal and physical) are identified.
- . Priorities can be established among these projects.
- . Such priorities can be scheduled over a period of time.
- . Continuing updating of information regarding new needs or problems, funding, to review priorities and adapt accordingly.

B. LEGAL & FINANCIAL TOOLS

Within the strategy framework described above, the following list of considerations should be given special attention in the implementation process.

1. PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission in its advisory role to the City Council regarding planning should take a prominent role in guiding El Cerrito's efforts in implementing the General Plan and keeping it updated. The Planning Commission must initiate implementation proposals as well as review day-to-day planning activities. In order for the Planning Commission to properly carry out its duties and responsibilities, the City Council should continue the practice of referring all matters of planning and development to the Planning Commission for review.

VI-3

2. ZONING ORDINANCE AND OFFICIAL MAP

The zoning ordinance is probably the single most effective means of implementing a community's land use plan. Furthermore, State Law requires that the zoning ordinance of a community be consistent with the General Plan. El Cerrito's Zoning Ordinance must be modified to reflect new provisions in the General Plan. The first task before the Planning Commission is to translate the Plan into action by initiating appropriate rezoning procedures in selected areas. New provisions developed should be designed to encourage high standards of development and to foster the most appropriate use of the land. Since the effectiveness of zoning is closely associated with their decisions, the Planning Commission must continue to uphold the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance as well as the General Plan.

The official Zoning Map, when amended, should be recorded with the City Clerk's office.

3. SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Subdivision regulations are another legal tool which is of great value in insuring the orderly development of a community. These regulations require coordination of new streets with an existing or planned street system, provide standards for lot layout and street design to assure proper development of land, require adequate street right-of-way, drainage facilities and easements

where necessary, and require the installation of adequate utilities. Subdivision regulations applied in advance of development thus provide a community with its only opportunity to insure that its new additions are properly designed. El Cerrito's subdivision regulations should be revised and updated to insure that these regulations are in conformity with the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.

4. CODES

Adequate codes provide sound standards for the construction, use and occupancy of buildings. The following codes have been adopted by El Cerrito:

- Building Code: The 1973 Edition of the Uniform Building Code by the International Conference of Building Officials.
- Electrical Code: The National Electrical Code of 1971 by the National Fire Protection Association.
- Fire Prevention Code: Title 19, California Administrative Code, State Fire Marshal Law.
- Housing Code: 1973 Edition of the Uniform Housing Code, by the International Conference of Building Officials.
- Mechanical Code: 1973 Edition of Uniform Mechanical Code by the International Conference of Building Officials.
- Plumbing Code: 1973 Edition of Uniform Plumbing Code by International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials.
- Sign Code: 1973 Edition of Uniform Sign Code by International Conference of Building Officials.

Continued effort should be made to review new codes or modifications to codes that would benefit the City's goal of achieving high quality construction in the City.

5. REFERRAL PROCESS

The referral process is an important means of insuring that all public projects conform to the Plan. Accordingly, all development projects, by all governmental agencies, affecting the planning area should be referred to the Planning Commission for a finding on whether the proposals conform to the General Plan.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REVIEW

Where development projects require environmental impact review, special attention should be given to the projects' conformance with the environmental policies of the General Plan. The various elements of the Plan and accompanying background reports can serve as resource information to guide environmental impact review.

7. SPECIAL AREA PLANS

Special areas should be initiated to develop precise plans for areas of special concern in the City. Such special area plans can provide more detailed policy guidance than the General Plan to program development.

8. COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT

Under California's Community Redevelopment Law, cities may use tax increment financing to revitalize areas where obsolete, unstable, or disruptive conditions present a visible social and economic liability to the community. For areas where property is under-utilized and multiple ownership is involved, the best opportunity to the City to help assure the maximum potential of the total area within the context of General Plan goals and policies, usually may rest on utilizing the California Community Redevelopment Law. Community redevelopment is a viable planning tool which should be explored.

VI-5

9. GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

In implementing the General Plan, the City should maintain close coordination of its planning activities with other governmental agencies through active participation in areawide and regional efforts in order to solve common problems, coordinate development of mutual resources and take advantage of common opportunities.

10. ANNUAL REVIEW

Each year the Planning Commission should formally review and as necessary amend the General Plan. By instituting this process it is possible to strengthen the purposes and uses of the Plan. All decisions about City development should be made with reference to the Plan, and where in conflict, plan policy should prevail unless said policy is duly amended.

11. FEDERAL/STATE AID PROGRAMS

There are substantial numbers of state and federal programs to

assist communities in solving their physical, economic and social problems. Catalogs of both federal and social programs which provide technical and financial assistance to communities are available for use by communities.

The City has recently taken advantage of the Urban Planning Assistance program to develop its Seismic Safety Element and Open Space Element of the General Plan. El Cerrito should investigate the existing assistance programs and continue monitoring new ones to determine their applicability to implementation of the General Plan. Should funds be available for appropriate use in El Cerrito, such programs should be pursued.

12. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The capital improvement program is a tool for public decision-making, and consists of a list of capital improvement projects, on a priority basis, and an estimate of the cost for each project scheduled over a five to ten year period. The Capital Improvement Program is a direct link between the budgetary process and the planning process. In order to be effective the program must be reviewed annually and keyed to policies in the General Plan. The Planning Commission should play a prominent role in development of the Capital Improvement Program to insure that the scarce resources are allocated among priority needs of the General Plan.

13. PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

A systematic program to increase awareness of the General Plan provisions on the part of private citizens and civic groups, already undertaken as part of the adoption process, should be pursued. This is envisioned as including wide distribution of the General Plan as adopted, especially copies of a large map showing land use, circulation, public facilities and open space, and also containing policies for all elements, and discussion of implementation steps on television during both regular City Council programs and special programs on specific topics.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CHAPTER SUMMARY

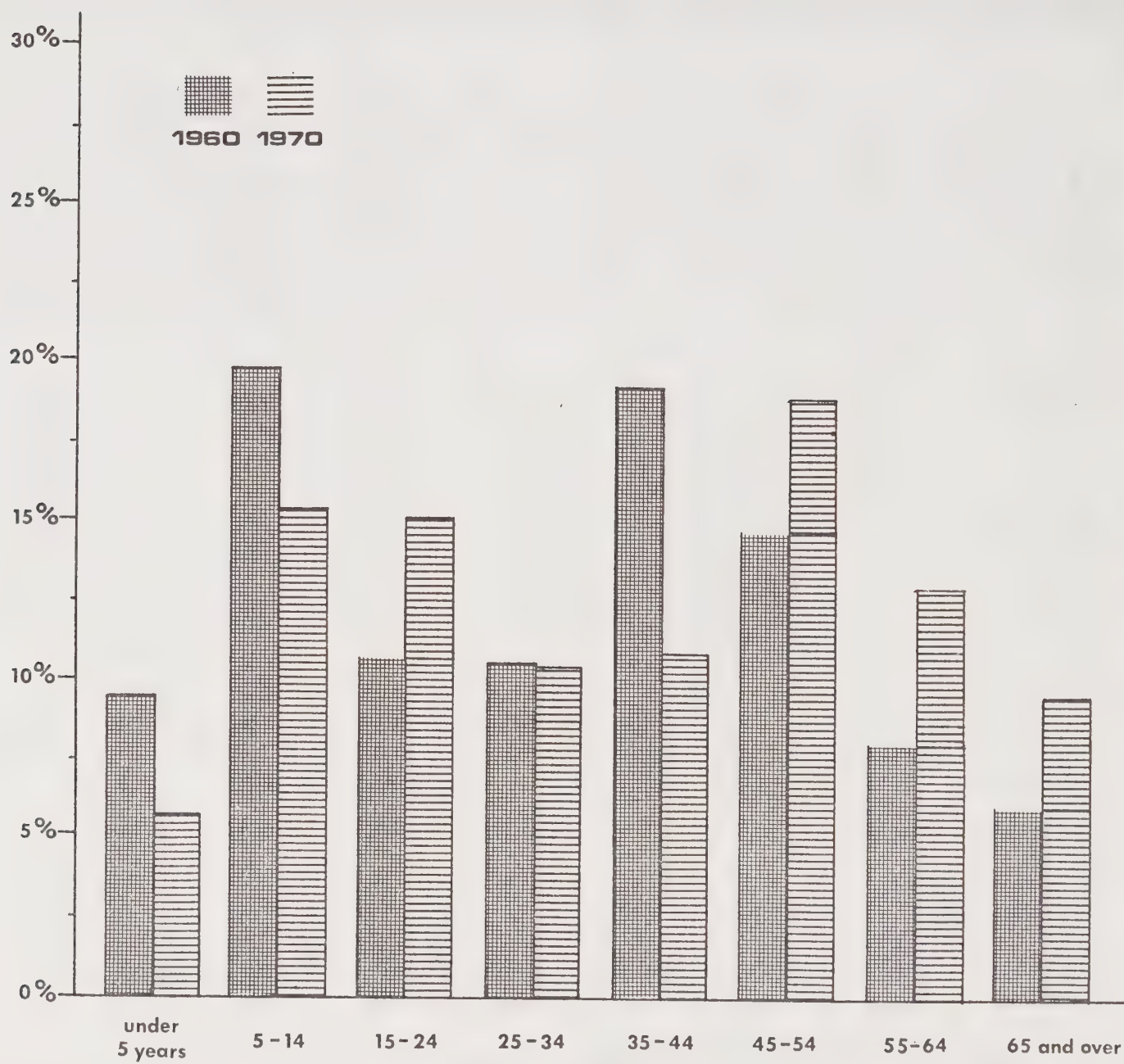
CHAPTER ILLUSTRATIONS.

A-1: EL CERRITO AGE COMPOSITION, 1960-1970

AGE	1960		1970		CHANGE	
	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOT. POPULA.	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOT. POPULA.	NUMBER	PERCENT
under 5	2450	9.7	1467	5.7	- 983	- 40.0
5-9	2525	10.0	1818	7.2	- 707	- 28.0
10-14	2480	9.8	2121	8.4	- 359	- 14.4
15-19	1740	6.9	2109	8.7	+ 369	+ 2.2
20-24	1140	4.5	1777	7.0	+ 637	+ 5.5
25-34	2830	11.3	2795	11.0	- 35	- 1.2
35-44	4580	18.2	2926	11.6	-1654	- 36.1
45-54	3740	14.9	4409	17.4	+ 669	+ 17.9
55-59	1230	4.9	1919	7.5	+ 689	+ 56.0
60-64	925	3.7	1434	5.6	+ 509	+ 55.0
65-74	1160	4.6	1514	6.1	+ 354	+ 30.5
75 plus	540	2.2	901	3.6	+ 361	+ 66.9
Median Age	33.5 years		36.2 years			

Source: U. S. Census Series 1960 and 1970.

A-2: **AGE GROUP COMPOSITION 1960 - 1970**



Source: U.S. Census Series 1960 and 1970

A-3: OCCUPATIONS OF LABOR FORCE, 1970

EL CERRITO - CONTRA COSTA COUNTY - SMSA

	EL CERRITO		CONTRA COSTA CO.		SMSA	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Tot. Population	25,190		558,389		3,107,517	
Median Income	\$13,358		\$12,423		\$11,802	
Education Level	12.8		12.5		12.5	
Occupation						
Prof/Tech.	3,180	27.4	38,808	18.4	230,086	18.2
Mgrs/Admin.	1,125	9.7	22,701	10.8	119,603	9.4
Sales Workers	877	7.6	18,447	8.7	103,599	8.2
Clerical & Kind.	2,697	23.2	38,436	18.2	272,149	23.0
Craftsmen/Fore.	1,429	12.3	31,833	15.2	156,210	12.3
Operatives	1,002	8.6	26,639	12.6	146,970	11.6
Serv. Workers	890	7.7	21,771	10.3	146,376	11.5
Laborers	311	2.7	9,956	4.7	55,808	4.5
Priv.Hsld.Wkrs.	97	.8	2,334	1.1	16,842	1.3
TOTAL	11,608	100.0	210,925	100.0	1,267,643	100.0

Source: 1970 U. S. Census
PHC1-189

A-4: INDUSTRY GROUPS AND PLACE OF WORK, 1970

	EL CERRITO	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
EMPLOYED PERSONS - TOTAL	11,608	
Industry of Employed Persons		
Construction	598	5.2
Manufacturing	2,111	18.2
Transportation	473	4.1
Communication	397	3.4
Wholesale	501	4.3
Retail	1,671	14.4
Finance/Ins/Realty	773	6.7
Business/Repair Service	460	4.0
Personal Service	437	3.8
Health Service	744	6.4
Education Service	1,585	13.7
Other Professional Service	829	7.1
Public Administration	790	6.8
Other	239	2.1
Place of Work *		
San Francisco	1,249	11.2
Oakland/Alameda	5,272	47.3
Contra Costa County	3,673	32.9
Other & Not Reported	952	8.5

* Because of differences in enumeration, totals are not identical for each category.

Source: 1970 Census of Population Census Tracts,
San Francisco-Oakland SMSA, PHC1-189

A-5: EMPLOYMENT WITHIN EL CERRITO, 1970

Employment Category	Employers in City	Employment Within the City
Agriculture	8	70
Construction	46	244
Manufacturing	22	105
Transportation/ Communication/Utilities	5	13
Wholesale	12	68
Retail	181	1772
Finance/Insurance/ Real Estate	50	208
Services	379	838
Government & Public Education	15	548
Non-Classified	109	192
TOTAL	827	4058

Source: Contra Costa County Planning Department,
Land Use & Transportation Study.

A-6: PER CAPITA TAXABLE SALES

TOTAL AND PER CAPITA TAXABLE SALES EL CERRITO AND CALIFORNIA 1964,1970,1972

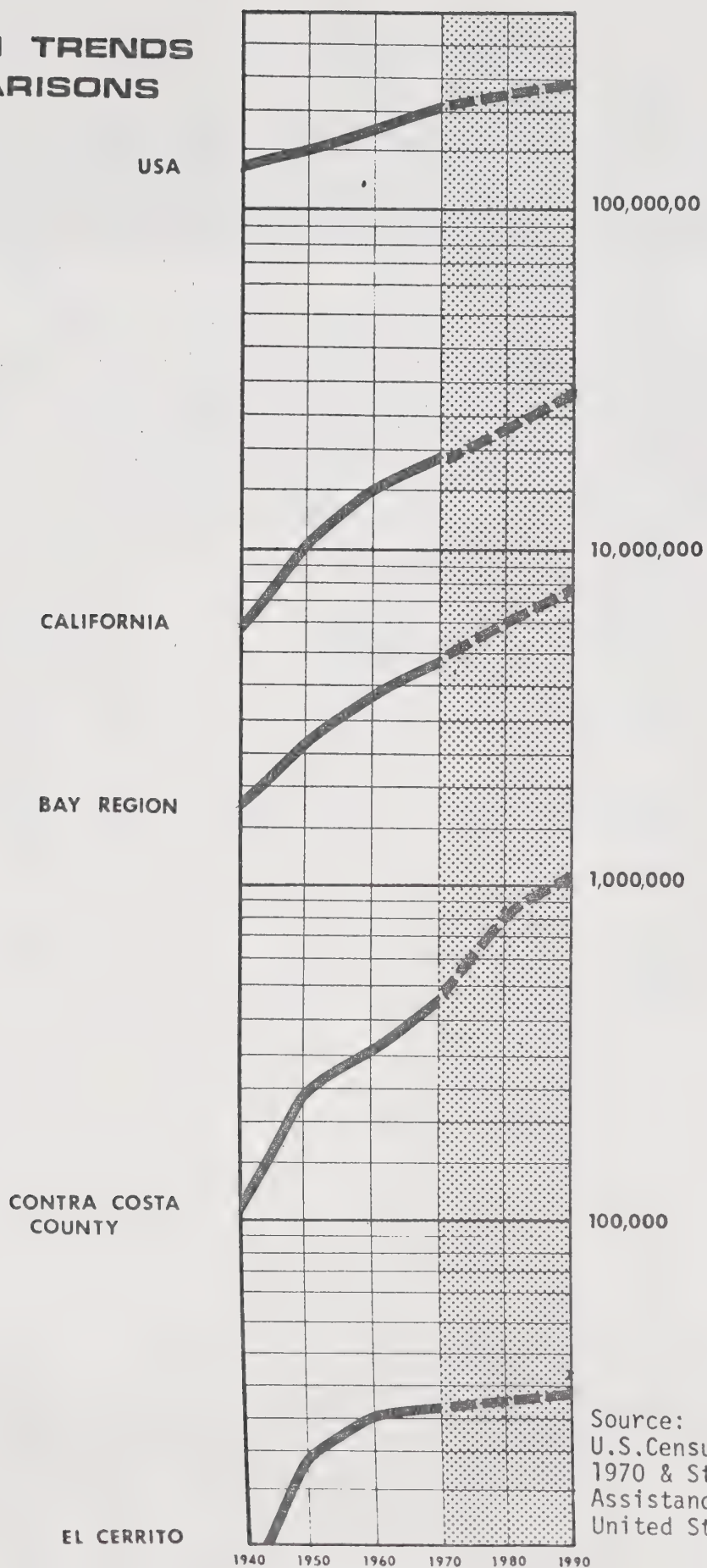
RETAIL STORES	CITY OF EL CERRITO			STATE OF CALIFORNIA		
	TOTAL SALES (000)	% OF TOTAL SALES	PER CAPITA SALES	TOTAL SALES (000,000)	% OF TOTAL SALES	PER CAPITA SALES
1964						
Apparel	\$ 3,925	10	\$142.41	\$ 1,445	5	\$ 79.24
General Merchandise	10,947	28	397.20	3,449	11	189.13
Food	3,184	8	115.52	1,734	6	95.09
Packaged Liquor	1,290	3	46.80	731	2	40.08
Eating and Drinking	3,756	10	136.28	2,266	7	124.28
Drug	2,112	5	76.63	768	3	42.14
Home Furnishings & Appliances	848	2	30.76	1,370	5	75.11
Building Matl & Farm Impl.	2,963	8	107.51	1,870	6	94.57
Motor Veh.Dlrs & Auto Supp.	3,033	8	110.05	4,496	15	246.59
Service Station	437	1	15.85	603	2	33.05
Other Retail	4,054	10	147.09	1,819	6	107.76
TOTAL RETAIL	\$36,549	93	\$1,326.16	\$20,550	68	\$1,127.04
ALL OTHER OUTLETS	2,765	7	100.32	9,715	32	532.76
TOTAL	\$39,314	100	1,426.48	\$30,265	100	\$1,659.80
1970						
Apparel	\$ 5,433	10	\$ 216.08	\$ 1,981	5	\$ 99.03
General Merchandise	17,164	32	681.38	5,280	12	263.98
Food	4,352	8	172.77	2,939	7	146.93
Packaged Liquor	2,328	4	92.42	1,025	2	51.24
Eating and Drinking	4,124	8	163.72	3,408	8	170.38
Drug	3,134	6	124.41	1,037	2	51.83
Home Furnishings & Appliances	1,624	3	64.47	1,457	3	72.85
Building Matl & Farm Impl.	3,421	6	135.81	2,011	5	90.78
Motor Veh.Dlrs & Auto Supp.	4,384	8	174.04	5,324	12	266.18
Service Station	493	1	19.57	854	2	42.72
Other Retail	4,651	9	184.64	3,381	8	178.80
TOTAL RETAIL	\$51,118	95	\$2,029.30	\$28,699	66	\$1,434.72
ALL OTHER OUTLETS	2,939	5	116.67	14,524	34	726.12
TOTAL	\$54,057	100	\$2,145.97	\$43,223	100	\$2,160.84
1972						
Apparel	\$ 5,678	9	\$ 225.41	\$ 2,198	4	\$ 107.12
General Merchandise	20,188 #e	32 e	801.39 e	6,108	12	351.41
Drug	#			1,105	2	53.82
Food	4,775	8	189.56	3,296	6	66.47
Packaged Liquor	2,608	4	103.53	1,125	2	54.81
Eating and Drinking	4,774	8	189.51	4,279	8	208.49
Home Furnishings & Appliances	2,581	4	102.46	1,775	3	86.47
Building Matl & Farm Impl.	4,401	7	174.71	2,804	5	136.60
Motor Veh.Dlrs & Auto Supp.	4,080	6	161.97	7,075	13	344.73
Service Station	2,041	3	81.02	2,577	5	125.54
Other Retail	8,421	13	335.00	4,176	8	203.48
TOTAL RETAIL	\$59,547	94	\$2,363.91	\$36,518	68	\$1,779.26
ALL OTHER OUTLETS	3,936	6	156.25	17,196	32	837.87
TOTAL	\$63,483	100	\$2,520.17	\$53,714	100	\$2,617.13

Other retail includes drug & general merchandise for El Cerrito.

e ESTIMATED at 31.8% of TOTAL (1970 percent).

Source: State Board of Equalization, 1965, 1971, 1973.

A-7: POPULATION TRENDS AND COMPARISONS



Source:
U.S. Census Series
1970 & Statistical
Assistance of the
United States 1972.

A-8: EL CERRITO SUMMARY

1970 HOUSING ANALYSIS		
	MEDIAN	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
Age of unit	18 yrs.	
Total housing unit	9251	
Built before 1940	1548	16.7
No. of rooms per unit	5.1	
Single-family structures	7502	81.1
Owner occupied	6365	70.0
Value, owner occupied	\$28,000	
Median Gross rent	\$154	
Lacking some/all plumbing facilities	78	0.8
1970 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS		
Total population	25,190	
Persons per household	2.76	
Families w/children under 18	3372	46.0
Total population under 18	6762	26.8
Families w/female head	646	8.8
Population between 55-64 yrs.	3353	13.3
Population 65 and over	2415	9.6
Population 75 and over	901	3.6
Foreign stock	8128	32.3
Negro	1388	5.5
Other race	2066	8.2
Total non-White	3454	13.7
Spanish American	1839	7.3
In same house 1965-70	13712	57.8
Moved into unit before 1950	1080	11.9
1970 ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS		
Education level	12.8	
High school graduates	11858	74.6
Family income	\$13,358	
Families below poverty line	204	2.7
Males 16 & over in labor force	7459	82.0
Male unemployment rate	294	4.0
Females 16 & over in labor force	4743	46.2
Female unemployment rate	254	5.4
Employment		
Professional & Technical	3180	27.4
Managers & Administration	1125	9.7
Sales Workers	877	7.5
Clericals & kindred	2697	23.2
Craftsmen and Foremen	1429	12.3
Operatives	1002	8.6
Service Workers	890	7.7
Work in San Francisco	1249	11.2
Work in Oakland & Alameda County	5272	47.3
Work in Contra Costa County	3673	32.9

Source:

U. S. Census,
1970

A-9a: DISTRIBUTION OF GROSS MONTHLY RENT BY YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT.

Year Structure Built	MONTHLY RENT								
	Less Than \$40	40-59	60-79	80-99	100-149	150-199	200 +	No Cash Rent	Total (%)
1969-70	0	0	7.6	6.1	7.6	54.5	24.2	0	100
1965-68	0	1.5	0	1.9	12.8	67.9	15.9	0	100
1960-64	.7	0	3.2	3.5	36.8	44.3	11.5	0	100
1950-59	0	.5	2.1	2.4	44.2	35.8	12.8	2.2	100
1940-49	0	0	5.5	5.9	40.9	31.6	11.7	4.4	100
1939 & earlier	0	1.0	7.3	11.5	35.1	37.8	6.0	6.3	100

Source: 1970 U. S. Census, 4th Count (#126)

A-9b: DISTRIBUTION OF OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS BY VALUE AND YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT.

Year Structure Built	VALUE OF UNITS							
	Less 5000	5000-9999	10,000-14,999	15,000-19,999	20,000-24,999	25,000-35,000	35,000+	Total (%)
1969-70	0	10.8	0	0	0	8.1	81.1	100
1965-68	0	0	0	0	2.2	18.5	79.3	100
1960-64	0	1.8	0	2.0	6.5	33.7	56.0	100
1950-59	.2	.2	.2	4.3	15.8	47.8	31.5	100
1940-49	.3	.8	2.5	15.8	37.3	33.8	9.5	100
1939 & earlier	.4	0	6.9	21.4	32.1	25.0	14.2	100

Source: 1970 U. S. Census, 4th Count.

A-10: DISTRIBUTION OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSEHOLDS BY AGE OF HOUSEHOLD AND YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT.

Age of Household		YEAR BUILT				
		Earlier 1939	1940-1949	1950-1959	1960-1970	Total (%)
	Under 30	19.6	38.1	34.0	8.3	100
	30-44	16.2	32.4	37.5	14.0	100
	45-64	17.6	33.9	33.4	15.0	100
	65 +	39.2	32.2	26.7	1.8	100
	Primary Individual	26.6	39.6	28.1	5.7	100
	Other Families	20.3	31.1	39.8	8.9	100

Source: U. S. Census, 1970.

A-11a: DISTRIBUTION OF OWNER HOUSEHOLDS BY AGE AND ANNUAL INCOME.

AGE OF HOUSEHOLD	ANNUAL INCOME								
	Less 2000	2000- 2999	3000- 4999	5000- 6999	7000- 9999	10,000- 14,999	15,000- 24,999	25,000+	Total (%)
Under 30	0	0	0	10.9	19.3	45.8	19.8	4.2	100
30-44	.5	.4	0	1.9	11.3	40.0	37.6	12.3	100
45-64	.7	.3	1.6	1.1	11.3	27.4	39.3	18.3	100
65 +	3.2	5.1	15.7	21.7	18.0	17.2	16.1	3.0	100
Other Fam	3.6	4.0	6.7	14.5	20.4	27.7	20.0	3.1	100
Primary Ind	18.6	16.0	14.9	10.3	16.0	18.8	4.8	.6	100

Source: Cross Tab From 1970 U. S. Census, 4th Count.

A-11b: DISTRIBUTION OF RENTER HOUSEHOLDS BY AGE AND ANNUAL INCOME.

AGE OF HOUSEHOLD	ANNUAL INCOME								
	Less 2000	2000- 2999	3000- 4999	5000- 6999	7000- 9999	10,000- 14,999	15,000- 24,999	25,000+	Total (%)
Under 30	1.3	0	5.9	11.6	21.8	39.5	17.2	2.7	100
30-44	2.1	0	.9	3.9	22.0	37.9	31.5	1.7	100
45-64	1.5	0	6.9	12.1	7.6	37.5	31.7	2.7	100
65 +	0	19.8	23.7	10.7	16.8	25.9	3.1	0	100
Other Fam	8.4	8.7	14.7	23.4	25.0	14.1	4.2	1.5	100
Primary Ind.	18.3	9.4	15.4	14.8	21.8	14.2	5.5	.6	100

Source: Cross Tab from 1970 U. S. Census, 4th Count.

APPENDIX B: OPEN SPACE

SUMMARY OF EL CERRITO'S OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT ACTION PROGRAM

The legislation requiring that an open space and conservation element be adopted also requires that an action program be included to implement it. This means that planning for open space cannot end with general proposals, but must specify actions needed to achieve open space proposals. It is the purpose of this appendix to summarize the Open Space and Conservation Element's Action Program. While the Action Program contained within the complete document deals with actions for the Cities of El Cerrito, Richmond and San Pablo, this summary shall deal with those actions which are mainly applicable to El Cerrito.

The Action Program is divided into three sections. Action to be undertaken by El Cerrito are listed first. The next section discusses requests the City may make of other government agencies:

1. Action by the Planning Department, Planning Commission and City Council of El Cerrito.
 - A. Adopt the Open Space and Conservation Element as the basis for decisions relating to development in El Cerrito.
 - B. Adopt the Seismic Safety Element and coordinate its policies with those of the Open Space and Conservation Element.
 - C. Continue efforts to prepare the required General Plan Elements.
 - D. Except where specific circumstances indicate otherwise, development decisions should be subordinate to the policies in the Open Space and Conservation Elements.
 - E. El Cerrito should encourage the granting of open space easements in open space areas, and should accept such easements when offered.
 - F. Use the policies in the Open Space and Conservation Plan as a guide for evaluating the environmental impact of proposed projects and to establish better environmental coordination with other agencies.
 - G. Review all public projects for consistency with this plan as early as possible in order to minimize wasted effort on projects deemed not to be in conformance.
 - H. Insure that the mandatory referral process is utilized by all governmental projects prior to any authorization.
 - I. Continue the Tri-Cities Planning Agency as a vehicle to continue the cooperation of the three cities in planning and related environmental matters.
 - J. Prepare a packet of information to give to applicants for building permits, including information regarding earthquake faults, unstable soils, other soils problems, flooding, eroding creekbanks, fire hazard, and the like and investigate ways to supply purchasers of real property with similar information.

K. Explore the possibilities for historic preservation as soon as possible.

2. Requests to Other Agencies, Boards, and Commissions.

- A. After the adoption of this element, request that the ABAG Executive Committee adopt this plan as a further definition or detailing of their plan, to be used by the ABAG staff in their planning efforts and request that all future projects they review be related to conformance with this plan.
- B. Encourage the citizens' Task Force and the East Bay Regional Park District staff to give high priority to proposed park acquisitions in the Tri-Cities Area, and open space lands received through dedication adjacent to EBRPD property should be offered to the Park District to protect the viewsheds of the facility wherever possible.
- C. Request EBMUD to study the effect of the Sobrante recycling facility on downstream vegetation in San Pablo Creek and express the City's concerns regarding mitigation measures for the American River Project; preserving the quality of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta; water reclamation; and water rates.
- D. Communicate to the Army Corps of Engineers and to the County Flood Control District policies included in the Open Space and Conservation Plans, and urge them to assist in implementing those policies.
- E. Gain the cooperation of the School District in retaining areas adjacent to schools for nature study areas and in developing such areas for nature study where possible.
- F. Urge the Tax Assessor to assess areas shown as open space on the General Plan at their value as open space.

APPENDIX C: DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN

SAN PABLO AVENUE DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN SUMMARY. (excerpted from the Main Document)

The proposals described in the report on the San Pablo Avenue Design Concept Plan and in the supporting graphic details prepared to give a clear picture of its recommendations, reflect three main objectives or purposes - to produce a more viable and effective pattern of development, to improve the traffic circulation characteristics of the Avenue, and to improve its appearance and design quality.

Development Pattern - The preceding sections have already described in some detail the pattern of uses indicated for future development and evolution along the Avenue.

The Plan for San Pablo Avenue is keyed to the General Plan's proposals relating to the city-wide and regional circulation network and to the overall pattern of land use in the San Pablo Avenue corridor. The clusters of commercial concentrations separated by high-density residential areas and institutional facilities are integrated into the system of east-west collector streets and secondary thoroughfares, and served by them. These clustering of specialized commercial uses at strategic points along the Avenue can develop greater attraction for potential consumers than the attenuated pattern of existing development. It can provide the businesses with an identifiable location and permit greater efficiency in the use of land area and the provision of off-street parking facilities. The Plan recommends that the entire depth of the block be regarded as the development unit, rather than the depth of the lots fronting on San Pablo Avenue. This can promote more effective and attractive types of development and facilitate the eventual creation of unified parking areas within the block, accessible from two or more block frontages.

Circulation Characteristics and Provisions - At the present time, there is no problem with regard to traffic volumes on San Pablo Avenue. The three moving lanes in each direction are more than adequate to accommodate the highest volumes experienced on the Avenue - about 20,000 vehicles per day (both directions), which occur at its southernmost section in El Cerrito. Traffic volumes will tend to increase as development and population settlement become more intense, but the proximity of Eastshore Freeway, which serves many of the same purposes as San Pablo Avenue as a major channel of north-south movement, and which will be reconstructed to accommodate a greater capacity of vehicles, will tend always to make San Pablo Avenue a second choice for through traffic, and will relieve it of some of the incremental volume.

The traffic deficiencies and problems of San Pablo Avenue are not now, nor are they likely to be, the result of inadequate capacity. They are produced by lack of continuity in right-of-way width, variations in the number of lanes and principally by the extremely large number of east-west streets which intersect with San Pablo Avenue. Most of these streets terminate at the Avenue, in that they are not continuous streets which allow traffic to move across the Avenue. Until the curving section of Fairmount Avenue between San Pablo Avenue and Carlson Boulevard was constructed relatively recently, and Potrero Avenue intersection was re-aligned, the only streets which were continuous across the Avenue were Central

Avenue and Cutting Boulevard within El Cerrito. Many of the side streets intersect with San Pablo Avenue at an angle rather than perpendicular to it, and the offsets from one side to another are particularly hazardous. In effect, many vehicles are forced to use the north-south San Pablo Avenue in order to travel in an east-west direction, due to the absence of suitable alternatives.

One particularly bad result of this functional anomaly and the overall configuration of the street pattern is that a large number of left-turn movements are made by vehicles moving in both directions on the Avenue. In most instances, the vehicle attempting to turn has to come to a stop before turning because of the probability of oncoming traffic in at least one of the three lanes it has to cross. When this occurs, the center lane is to all intents and purposes rendered unusable and the effective number of lanes is reduced to two. Persons who drive along the Avenue regularly will avoid the center lane, and in many instances will avoid the lane next to the parking lane also, because of the possibility of delay caused by a car pulling in or out of a parking space, or by someone opening the door of a parked car. Only one lane can operate effectively for traffic moving along the Avenue and weaving movements by vehicles attempting to avoid delays in the lanes on each side adversely affect its smoothness of flow.

A road which is safe and pleasant to drive along is consistent in its width, predictable in terms of its traffic-handling organization, continuous in its direction of flow, and gives a sense of protection from hazardous situations. At the present time, San Pablo Avenue does not perform well under any of these headings along its entire length in El Cerrito. Three lanes of traffic in one direction opposed by a similar number in the other direction, and separated only by painted lines on the road surface is not an adequate arrangement, particularly when inconspicuous and poorly spaced side streets promote numerous turn movements on to and off the Avenue.

The General Plan has indicated additional continuous east-west streets crossing San Pablo Avenue (Stockton-Panama, Moeser-Carlson, Fall-Hill) and greater channelization of movement, particularly in the two one-way pairs of streets (Fairmount-Central, and Cutting-Hill). Other improvements having a bearing upon San Pablo Avenue are the extension of Richmond Street as a secondary north-south arterial from Fairmount Avenue to Moeser Lane, the minor redesign of the Manila-Bay View Avenue intersection at San Pablo Avenue and the improvement in the alignment and traffic control devices at the intersection of Potrero and San Pablo Avenues. All of these will have the effect of increasing the east of east-west movement, focusing it upon selected streets designed for this purpose and relieving San Pablo Avenue of some unwanted and conflicting traffic movements.

The necessity for left-turn movement will persist, perhaps at a reduced level in some locations, but at a higher level in others. The proposal for a median divider, wide enough (at least 16 feet wide) to accommodate pockets for traffic making left turns, removes the obstruction these vehicles create from the through-lanes, gives these vehicles protection from rear-end collisions and enables them to complete their turn movement safely and without pressure. The median also forms a tangible barrier between the opposing flows of traffic and removes the danger of head-on collisions caused by steering a few inches over a painted line. It assists in the consistent channelization of traffic and provides visual relief to the driver. Retail areas located on streets on which it is enjoyable and safe to drive will obviously attract greater patronage than those in hazardous or banal surroundings.

The concept of a median has additional advantages not directly related to traffic circulation objectives. A landscaped median can introduce an extremely attractive element into an otherwise dreary setting, breaks up a monotonous expanse of asphalt, and makes it safer, easier and more attractive for the pedestrian to cross the road. At the present time, a person crossing San Pablo Avenue has to face considerable risk in walking approximately 90 feet between sidewalks without any physical protection. With a median to act as an island, and with the sidewalks extended out into the parking lane at crosswalks, a pedestrian would have only two 25-foot roadways to cross. The two center lanes, which would be removed to make way for a 16-foot median occupy a width of at least 26 feet of roadway. The difference of about ten feet of roadway would make it possible to make the remaining traffic and parking lanes wider or it could be used to widen the sidewalks on one or both sides of the Avenue.

A median does prevent traffic from making left turns into uses with frontage on the Avenue, but on a street like San Pablo Avenue such movements create hazards and inconvenience for other drivers and promote scattered and attenuated development patterns. With a median installed, a driver wishing to enter a use in mid-block on the opposite side of the street would have a number of alternative ways of reaching his destination. He could proceed to the next left-turn pocket where U-turns were permitted and so double back to his destination. If U-turns are not permitted, he could complete his left turn and then circle to the right around the block to return to the flow of traffic on the Avenue passing by his destination. Another method would entail his making a right turn from the Avenue and then circling the block to the left to reach a street crossing the Avenue from which he could make a left turn in the direction of his destination. If the destination was part of a unified development in a block providing parking on a cooperative basis, the effort would be minor, because access could be made available on all four sides of the block.

The breaks indicated in the median divider and the possibilities of street closure are to be considered eventual possibilities rather than as basic plan requirements. In general, the longer the distance between median breaks and the fewer the number of intersecting streets, the greater will be the improvement in the east of traffic flow (and the appearance of the street), but there are obviously limits to these principles. In practice it is undesirable to extend a median for more than 1,200 - 1,400 feet without providing a break and left-turn pockets, and block lengths much in excess of 1,000 - 1,200 feet may constitute a barrier to circulation and access to internal areas. The street closings suggested assist in the creation of protected internal residential precincts, increase the usable frontage on the Avenue, provide a method for assisting in the development of common off-street parking areas, and decrease the number of potential traffic conflict points. It is generally undesirable for large numbers of local streets to intersect with a major arterial - they should feed to a collector street and then be conducted to the arterial street and freeway network. The system of median breaks, street closures and the land use objectives for San Pablo Avenue already described above are mutually compatible and interdependent. The organization and channelization of traffic will assist in the development of specialized commercial nuclei and these functional clusters will require a more highly organized traffic pattern to operate effectively.

The recommendation to obtain a consistent right-of-way of 120 feet in width from Fairmount Avenue to the north city limits is based upon the need to provide a consistent number of traffic lanes, the desirability of extending the 16-foot wide

landscaped median along the entire length of San Pablo Avenue and the requirements of curb parking and sidewalk widths. The width of 120 feet is adequate for all foreseeable needs - even for the possibility that eventually a third lane in each direction might be required to accommodate increased volumes. If this ever occurs, a 120-foot right-of-way can support 5 traffic lanes, a 16-foot median with turn pockets, and substantial sidewalks, although parking would have to be provided off-street within adjacent blocks. This would require two 36-foot roadways separated by the 16-foot median, and permitting sidewalks 16 feet wide on either side. The 36-foot roadways could be used with either two 14-foot traffic lanes and an 8-foot parking lane, or with three 12-foot traffic lanes and no parking lane. In either case, the median and the sidewalks would remain unchanged. However, widening the right-of-way to 120 feet shall occur only when and where it is demonstrated to be required for safety or other reasons. It may be expedient to widen the 100-foot right-of-way to only 108 or 112 feet in some instances, and still preserve the continuity and amenities of the basic concept. A narrower right-of-way in some other sections might require one or more of the design standards to be reduced below the acceptable minimum - the traffic lanes, parking lanes, median or sidewalks would be substandard. The possibility of the City's attempting to acquire more than the 120-foot width in some areas was not seriously considered due to the difficulties and expense involved in such an undertaking and the lack of necessity for such a policy.

Appearance and Design Provisions - Some suggestions on the urban design character, street furniture and details of the plan to improve San Pablo Avenue's appearance have been illustrated in the perspective drawings and schematic plan diagrams submitted to the City. The following checklist indicates some of the possible steps which can be taken to implement the objectives of the Plan for San Pablo Avenue.

- . Plant street trees in sidewalk wells, in concrete planters and other treatment; ensure that they do not conflict with doors of parked cars;
- . Use different textures and materials in the street and sidewalk surfaces, such as brick, tile, pebbles, patterned concrete in a variety of colors to define areas of different use and character, in crosswalks, turn lanes, and the narrowed portions of the median divider;
- . Plant trees and shrubs in the medians, and develop grass areas and other designs, such as bollards, along narrow portions;
- . Where crosswalks intersect with sidewalks and median dividers, create a bevelled ramp in the curb to facilitate walking and pushing carts and baby carriages;
- . Broaden sidewalks where there is a transition between a parking lane and a bus lane, or right-turn lane;
- . Develop sidewalk kiosks and bus shelters of attractive design in the wider portions of the sidewalks;
- . Encourage additional building set-backs in mid-block sections of heavily pedestrian-travelled areas in order to provide small plazas and alcoves in the frontages;
- . Encourage diagonal corners on buildings at the end of the blocks, in order to increase sight distance and to add interest to the spatial form of the area;

- . Differentiate the treatment of sidewalk landscaping between areas of automobile emphasis and those where pedestrians are concentrated;
- . Arrange curb parking spaces in pairs, to permit easy ingress and egress;
- . Encourage and sponsor the development of water effects and fountains in the median and sidewalk areas where feasible;
- . Extend the sidewalks into the parking lane at crosswalks where feasible and where this would not conflict with permitted U-turn movements;
- . Develop sign controls limiting tall pylon signs to major groupings of stores, and limit individual stores to smaller signs integrated into the overall outline of the buildings;
- . Remove all billboard structures from the Avenue;
- . Restrict flashing lights on signs;
- . Install new street name signs of good design, and make provision for indicating cross-streets and block numbering system along San Pablo Avenue by signs in the median divider;
- . Remove all overhead wires crossing the Avenue, and high utility poles visible from the Avenue;
- . Require the removal of all obsolete business signs;
- . Encourage a high level of building and site maintenance;
- . Encourage the development of common parking areas for block units with access from adjoining streets;
- . Consider renaming and renumbering the Avenue; a name like "El Cerrito Boulevard" and smaller street numbers could enhance its image;
- . Collaborate with Richmond and Albany on creating attractive entry points into the City;
- . Encourage the development of some vertical points of reference and identity;
- . Retain the existing 100-foot right-of-way south of Fairmount Avenue, but encourage the Plaza Shopping Center to provide additional sidewalk area along San Pablo Avenue to accommodate the heavy pedestrian traffic at this location and to improve the amenities of the congested bus-stops;
- . Develop linkages between the BART linear park and the Avenue;
- . Develop a connected system of internal pedestrian ways linking parking lots and building areas;
- . Encourage well-designed lighting of appropriate scale in pedestrian areas and along sidewalks;
- . Provide coordination and design guidance in proposals for new awnings, store fronts and other details in order to achieve a unified and cohesive appearance.

APPENDIX D: LAND USE

INVENTORY OF EXISTING LAND USE.

A. METHODOLOGY.

In 1966 a land use survey was conducted by Duncan & Jones, Planning Consultants, as a basis for development of the 1966 General Plan. However, because no procedures were established to regularly update the data from this survey, the City had no accurate data to describe the land use activities in 1974. The 1974 study relies on land use data made available by the Contra Costa County Land Use And Transportation Study, a study made in 1970 in which a detailed parcel-by-parcel inventory of land use in the county was made. The data, in the form of summary printouts by Census tracts and major aggregations, was then updated to reflect the current situation. Because statistics from the 1966 Study reflect somewhat different techniques of classification and data processing, comparison of this data with the 1974 data is not practical except for major aggregations, shown in Figure D-1. The total land area in El Cerrito is approximately 2,337 acres or approximately 3.7 square miles.

FIGURE D-1: ESTIMATED AREA COMPARISON FOR CITY OF EL CERRITO

	<u>1966 Survey</u>		<u>1974 Survey</u>		<u>PERCENT CHANGE</u>
	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL CITY AREA</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL CITY AREA</u>	
Developed Land	1699	72.70	1721.13	73.65	+ .95
Vacant Land	179	7.66	159.94	6.84	- .82
NET LAND AREA (sub-total)	1878		1881.07		
Rights-of-way	459	19.64	456.00	19.51	- .13
GROSS LAND AREA	2337	100.00	2337.07	100.00	

The land use data, for the purposes of this analysis, have been grouped into nine major categories: Residential, Commercial, Light Industrial, Transportation and Utilities, Institutional, Parks/Recreation and Open Space, other development Land and Rights-of-way.

Residential use includes single-family, two-family and multi-family dwellings and hotels, motels and group quarters; commercial includes retail, personal and commercial service activities, financial and professional offices and automation related activities; the industrial category includes essentially light manufacturing and storage uses; institutional uses include educational, governmental and assembly uses; parks/recreation and open space as well as public parks and playgrounds; vacant land includes all vacant properties; rights-of-way includes all state and local financed and residential street and railroad rights-of-way.

B. RESIDENTIAL.

The largest category of land use by acreage in the City is residential. Residential development, as computed from the field survey, occupies approximately 112.49 acres or 64.64 percent of the developed land and 47.6 percent of the total land area of the City. This residential land use is primarily composed of single-family residential structures and their accompanying auxiliary land uses, such as yards, garages, gardens, etc. Single-family residential land use accounted for approximately 92.87 percent of the recorded residential land, while two-family residential land use accounted for 2.24 percent and multi-family residential accounted for 4.52 percent. Motels, hotels and group quarters accounted for the remaining .37 percent of the residential land use category.

C. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.

Relative to the economic base of the City, land utilization for light industrial and commercial activities was recorded as covering approximately 100.92 acres or 4.32 percent of the total land area of the City. This general group includes the categories of retail trade, personal services, commercial service, financial/professional offices and automotive related services as shown on Figure D-2.

Of this 100.92 acres, land used for light industrial operations, (heavy commercial), was computed as occupying 12.13 acres or 12.02 percent of the total land used for economic activities and approximately .52 percent of the total land area, indicating a very small level of such activity in the City. Retail trade, service activities and financial/professional office activities were computed as occupying a total of 88.79 acres or approximately 87.98 percent of land used for economic activities and 3.8 percent of the total land area of the City. Such commercial activities generally involve transactions directly between the consumer and the provider of the goods and services, such as department stores, automobile dealers, apparel shops, banks, and employment services. Communication, transportation and utility uses occupy 74.86 acres or approximately 3.2 percent of the total land area in the City, nearly as much as all commercial activities in the City.

D. INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITIES.

Certain significant land use activities in El Cerrito serve organizations which, by tradition, establish precepts and principles in the society or the culture of the community. These land uses are categorized as institutional land uses and were computed as utilizing approximately 105.23 acres of land in the City or approximately 4.51 percent of the total land area. This category is primarily composed of land devoted to educational, religious, assembly, and governmental purposes.

Land used for religious and assembly purposes, including places of worship, fraternal lodges, etc., total approximately 15.17 acres or almost 14.42 percent of the land area in this category. The largest single land use classification in this institutional category by acreage, is land used for educational purposes. Such land in 1974 totaled 84.12 acres and represents 79.94 percent of the total category. This total land area is composed of 34.06 acres used for public elementary schools; 11.28 acres used for junior high schools, and 28.32 acres devoted to the senior high school. Additionally, non-public schools occupy approximately 10.46 acres of land area.

FIGURE D-2:

EXISTING LAND USE BY MAJOR CATEGORIES, 1974

LAND USE	TOTAL LAND AREA (ACRES)	% OF TOTAL LAND AREA	% OF TOTAL NET LAND AREA	% OF TOTAL DEVELOPED LAND AREA
RESIDENTIAL	1112.49	47.60	59.14	64.64
Single Family Dwellings	1033.14	44.20	54.92	60.03
Two Family Dwellings (Duplex)	24.95	1.07	1.33	1.45
Multi-family Dwellings	50.26	2.15	2.67	2.92
Hotels, Motels, Group Quarters	4.15	.18	.22	.24
COMMERCIAL (RETAIL, WHOLESALE & SERVICES)	101.45	4.34	5.39	5.89
Retail Trade	71.07	3.04	3.78	4.12
Personal Services	3.56	.15	.19	.21
Commercial Services	2.22	.09	.12	.13
Financial, Professional, Offices	8.07	.35	.43	.47
Automotive Related	16.53	.71	.87	.96
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL	12.13	.52	.65	.71
TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION & UTILITIES	74.86	3.20	3.99	4.35
INSTITUTIONAL	105.23	4.50	5.59	6.11
Governmental	5.94	.26	.32	.34
Educational	84.12	3.60	4.46	4.89
Church and Assembly	15.17	.64	.81	.88
CULTURAL, RECREATION & PARKS	314.97	13.48	16.74	18.30
Private Recreation	171.46	7.34	9.11	9.96
Parks and Cultural	143.50	6.14	7.63	8.34
TOTAL DEVELOPED LAND	1721.13			
TOTAL VACANT LAND	159.94	6.85	8.50	
TOTAL NET LAND AREA	1881.07			
RIGHTS-OF-WAY	456.00	19.51		
Streets and Pathways	427.00	18.27		
Railroad	16.00	.66		
Freeway	13.00	.56		
TOTAL LAND AREA	2337.07	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

E. PARKS, RECREATIONAL AND OPEN SPACE ACTIVITIES.

Approximately 322.07 acres are recorded in the parks, recreational, and open space category. This category includes land utilized for cultural and club activities, sports, and leisure time activities. Detailed uses also include parks, playgrounds, and golf courses. The above activities occupy approximately 13.78 percent of the land area of the City.

Approximately 147.5 acres of land in this category are used for the Mira Vista Golf Course, and approximately 143.5 acres of land are used for park and playground purposes. That portion of the Sunset Cemetery which is in El Cerrito (considered part of the open space system) accounts for 7.11 acres or 2.21 percent of the total category.

F. VACANT LAND.

Those lots which were vacant and considered unused or undeveloped were classified in this category. This undeveloped land category was computed as representing approximately 159.94 acres or 6.84 percent of the total land area of the City. There has been a .82 percent decrease in the amount of vacant land in the City since 1966, due primarily to residential construction.

APPENDIX E. DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES.

The following Development Guidelines are general concepts which suggest ways to improve the residential and commercial environment in El Cerrito within the context of the goals and policies in the General Plan. These guidelines are intended to serve as a broad framework for developing more specific and detailed development criteria at the Design Review level as well as providing guidance for implementing the provisions of the General Plan.

RESIDENTIAL:

- Appearance - Quality design and careful site planning of multi-family residential development should be encouraged.
- Scale - The height and bulk of a building should be related to the scale of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Site Size - Multi-family residential developments should be constructed on larger sites because such sites have a greater potential for more living amenities.
- Landscaping - Landscaping should be coordinated with architectural design and site planning.
- Compatibility - The overall design and landscape treatment of multi-family developments should be compatible with the existing character of the neighborhood
- Open Space - Greater amounts of usable open space should be provided by multi-family residential development.
- Siting - All developments must also recognize the need for safety features, such as adequate vehicle access.

COMMERCIAL:

- Appearance - Because the appearance of commercial facilities reinforces the economic health of the City, special emphasis should be placed on quality design of such facilities.
- Clustering - New commercial development should be master planned and encouraged to cluster in compact architectural groups to provide visual harmony and better use of the land.
- Siting - The site planning of commercial facilities along San Pablo Avenue should be sensitive to the circulation and appearance provisions of the San Pablo Avenue Concept Plan.
- Environment - A pedestrian environment should be created in commercial areas.
- Compatibility - Commercial developments in proximity to residential areas should be generously buffered to provide adequate transition.
- Design Features - Design features such as signing, landscaping, lighting, etc. are integral and complementary elements in the overall architectural composition and should be integrated into the design of commercial development.

APPENDIX F: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

In the development of this General Plan, major consideration has been given throughout to the effects the policies and programs will have on the environment of the City. This is most obvious, for instance, in the Seismic Safety and Open Space and Conservation Elements and in the areas where these Elements have their prime influence on the formulation of the Land Use Element. In addition, however, the entire document has been developed with a careful weighing of the effects of alternative proposals, and changes to existing plans, on the total environment of the City -- the economic and social as well as the physical.

This environmental consideration is of prime importance inasmuch as the adopted General Plan, including the background reports, will serve as the basis for judging the kind of impact all development proposals will have and for the amount of impact on the surroundings.

a. THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION.

The impact of these General Plan proposals themselves is highly restricted by the essentially fully developed status of the City at this date. Also, the analysis of impact is limited by the fact that the previous plan already provided policies and programs guiding development, so that the impact of policies under this General Plan will be different only insofar as policies of this General Plan are different. The actual impact is taken into consideration throughout this document.

b. ANY ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED IF THE PROPOSAL IS IMPLEMENTED.

Rather than raising the possibility of adverse environmental effects, the adoption of these Elements will serve to better control new or changing land uses, thereby reducing adverse effects. This General Plan allows the City to assess the impact of the policies of previous Plans in order to maintain or reinforce desirable results or to encourage different proposals in instances where effects of development have not been as anticipated. In this same vein, it should be noted that environmental concerns have become of increasing importance as the City and surrounding areas have become more built up and less open area is available for an outlet.

c. MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACT.

Although mitigation measures are generally applied to specific projects, some could apply to General Plan policies. Some of the proposals do allow for higher densities in some areas than permitted under present regulations, but anticipated zoning controls will require more amenities and open space for higher density projects. Further, where higher densities are permitted, improvements are called for in adjoining streets to relieve traffic congestion that could otherwise result. Specific proposals, which must conform to the policies of this Plan, may also be subject to Planning Commission and Design Review Board action, as specified in the zoning ordinance.

d. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION.

Given El Cerrito's almost totally developed status, alternative proposals are more limited than in a City with large vacant areas. The first alternative is to continue with the 1967 General Plan. Inherent in this document, however, is the purpose of improving upon previous policies, correcting deficiencies and reflecting new goals of El Cerrito's citizens. Further, this Plan contains new Elements required by California laws.

Alternatives to specific items within the various Elements have been discussed by the Planning Commission in workshop sessions in order that the finalized product shall represent the proposal with the most benefits for all citizens.

e. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG TERM PRODUCTIVITY.

In this respect, measuring short-term uses and long-term productivity, the General Plan proposals have a very beneficial effect. As an example, this is particularly obvious in the area of geologic safeguards: consideration of areas which may experience landslide in the designation of land use categories as well as in the establishment of construction procedures involves viewing current action in the light of future issues.

f. ANY IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES WHICH WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED ACTION SHOULD IT BE IMPLEMENTED.

This category of irreversible changes applies almost exclusively to vacant areas; although not all of the City is developed, this Plan makes no essential changes in type of development permitted for vacant lands.

g. THE GROWTH INDUCING IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION.

Although in some limited areas this General Plan may allow higher densities, because of controls requiring additional amenities, the total holding capacity for all neighborhoods is somewhat less.

In fact, because of these differing controls and also as a result of changes in demographic rates, the design population for this Land Use Element is a lesser figure than the one contemplated in the 1967 Plan.

The highest density areas are confined to those areas best served by public transportation in order to avoid traffic congestion.

The Planning Commission finds that within this document and within the background reports and supplemental Elements prepared as part of the General Plan program, the Planning Commission had adequate information on environmental factors before it during its deliberations and that these factors were considered in reaching decisions on General Plan elements; therefore, this Commission finds the General Plan contains its own Environmental Impact Report.

h. INDEX TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS.

This index is intended to correlate and identify where the General Plan addresses the major points in the guidelines for the processing procedures for Environmental Impact Reports.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- A. Legal Description - Location *OSC: II-2; SS; RA
- B. Site Description ES; I-5; OSC; II-2,3,; SS; RA; V-1
- C. Proposal ES; I-1-3,5; OSC; II-1-5; TP; III-1-4,6-8,10,11,13,14; SS; IV-1-7; RA; V-17-18,31-33; VI-1-4; B; C; E; F
- D. History ES; I-1, 5, 6; II-1,5; TP; III-1-4, 6-10, 13, 14; SS; IV-1; RA; V-19-27, 33; A; C; D

II. ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY

- A. Soils OSC; II-1,3,4; SS; IV-7
- B. Geology OSC; II-1,4; TP; SS; IV-1,7; RA
- C. Natural Environment
 - 1. Existing Vegetation/Wildlife ES; OSC; II-1-4; SS; V-2; RA
 - 2. Climate OSC; II-3; TP; SS; RA
 - 3. Mean Annual Precipitation OSC
- D. Pollution
 - 1. Air Quality OSC; II-3; RA
 - 2. Noise Factors ES; I-2,3; OSC; TP; III-2-10; RA; V-4, 11

III. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- A. Impact upon Natural Environment
 - 1. Plant/Wildlife Communities ES; I-2,3,; OSC; II-2-5; SS; VI-3; F
 - 2. Seismic And Geologic Hazards I-2; OSC; II-4; SS; IV-1-7; V-13-14, VI-3; F
 - 3. Flooding OSC; II-4; SS; IV-1,7; RA; VI-3; F
 - 4. Local Climate OSC; TP; SS; RA; II-3; F
 - 5. Air Quality ES; I-2,3,; OSC; II-3; VI-3; C; F
- B. Impact on Public Facilities
 - 1. Water ES; I-2,3; OSC; II-1,3-5; SS; IV-3-7; RA; V-13,15; VI-3; D
 - 2. Sewer ES; I-3; OSC; II-3,4; TP; III-8; SS; IV-3-7; RA; V-13,15,16; VI-3; D
 - 3. Fire Protection ES; I-2,3; OSC; II-3,5; TP; III-9; SS; IV-1,4-6; RA; V-4,13,14; VI-3; D

B. Impact on Public Facilities

4. Police Protection ES; I-3; OSC; SS; IV-4; 6; RA; V-4,13,14;
C; D
5. Transportation Network ES; I-2,3; OSC; II-5; III-1-14; TP; SS;
IV-3,4,6; RA; V-1,2,4-6,15,17,32; VI-3;
C;D
6. Schools ES; I-3,8; II-1,2,4,5; OSC; III-8; SS; IV-5; RA;
V-2,4,13-17; VI-3; C; D

C. Impact upon Socio-Economic Environment

1. Impact on Adjacent Land Uses ES; I-1-3,6,8; OSC; II-2;
III-2,6,13,14; TP; SS; IV-1,2,6,7;
RA; V-1-12,17,19,22-27; VI-1,2; A;
C;D
2. Impact on El Cerrito's Economy and Tax Base EA; I-1 ,3,5,8-11;
OSC; II-1; TP; RA; V-2,4,5,10,13,18,
23,24,26,28,29; VI-1; A; C; D; E
3. Impact upon Population ES; I-2,3,5-12; OSC; II-2,4; TP; III-1-3,
6-10; SS; IV-1,2,4-7; RA; V-1,8,14,18,19,
23-29; VI-1, A; D; E
4. Impact on Aesthetic and Visual Qualities ES; I-1; OSC; II-1,2,4,5;
TP; III-2,3,7-11,13,14; SS; IV-1; RA;
V-1,6,7,10-16,23,24,31-33; VI-1; C; D; E

IV: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT RELATIONSHIPS

- A. Adverse Environmental Effects which cannot be avoided ES; I-8,9,11;
OSC; II-1,3; TP; III-7-8; SS; IV-1,2,7;
RA; V-2,4,8,10,11,13,15; V-22,23,27-29;
VI-1-4; C; E; F
- B. Mitigation Measures proposed to Minimize the Impact ES; I-1,9,11;
OSC; II-2,3,; TP; III-1-3,7,8,10,14;
IV-1-7; SS; RA; V-8,10,13,27-29,31-33;
VI-1-4; C; D; E; F
- C. Alternatives to the Proposed Action ES; I-2,3; OSC; II-1,5; III-2,3,7;
SS: IV-1,2,7; RA; V-8,10,13,27-29,31-33;
VI-1; C; D; F
- D. Relationship between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and
the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-term productivity ES; I-1-3; OSC;
II-2-5; TP; III-3,4,6,7,9,10,13,14; SS; IV-2,5,6; RA; V-1,12,15,22,23,
27-29,31,32; VI-1; C; E; F
- E. Irreversible Environmental changes which would be involved in the proposed
Action should it be implemented ES; I-1; OSC; II-5; TP; III-1,13,14; SS;
RA; V-2,19,26,27,31; VI-1,3; F
- F. The Growth-inducing Impact of the Proposed Action ES; I-1; OSC; II-5;
TP; III-1,13,14; SS; RA; V-2,19,26,27,31;
VI-1-3; F
- G. The Boundaries of the Area which may be significantly affected
by the proposed action OSC; SS; RA; E; F

* NOTES: ROMAN NUMERALS REFER TO SECTIONS OF GENERAL PLAN DOCUMENT.

ES = ECONOMIC STUDY OF EL CERRITO

OSC = OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION GENERAL PLAN ELEMENT

TP = TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM STUDY

SS = SEISMIC SAFETY STUDY

RA = RESIDENTIAL ANALYSIS OF EL CERRITO

A)

B)

C) = 1975 GENERAL PLAN APPENDICES.

D)

E)

F)

APPENDIX G: NOISE ELEMENT ILLUSTRATIONS AND TECHNICAL DATA.

THE NATURE OF NOISE.

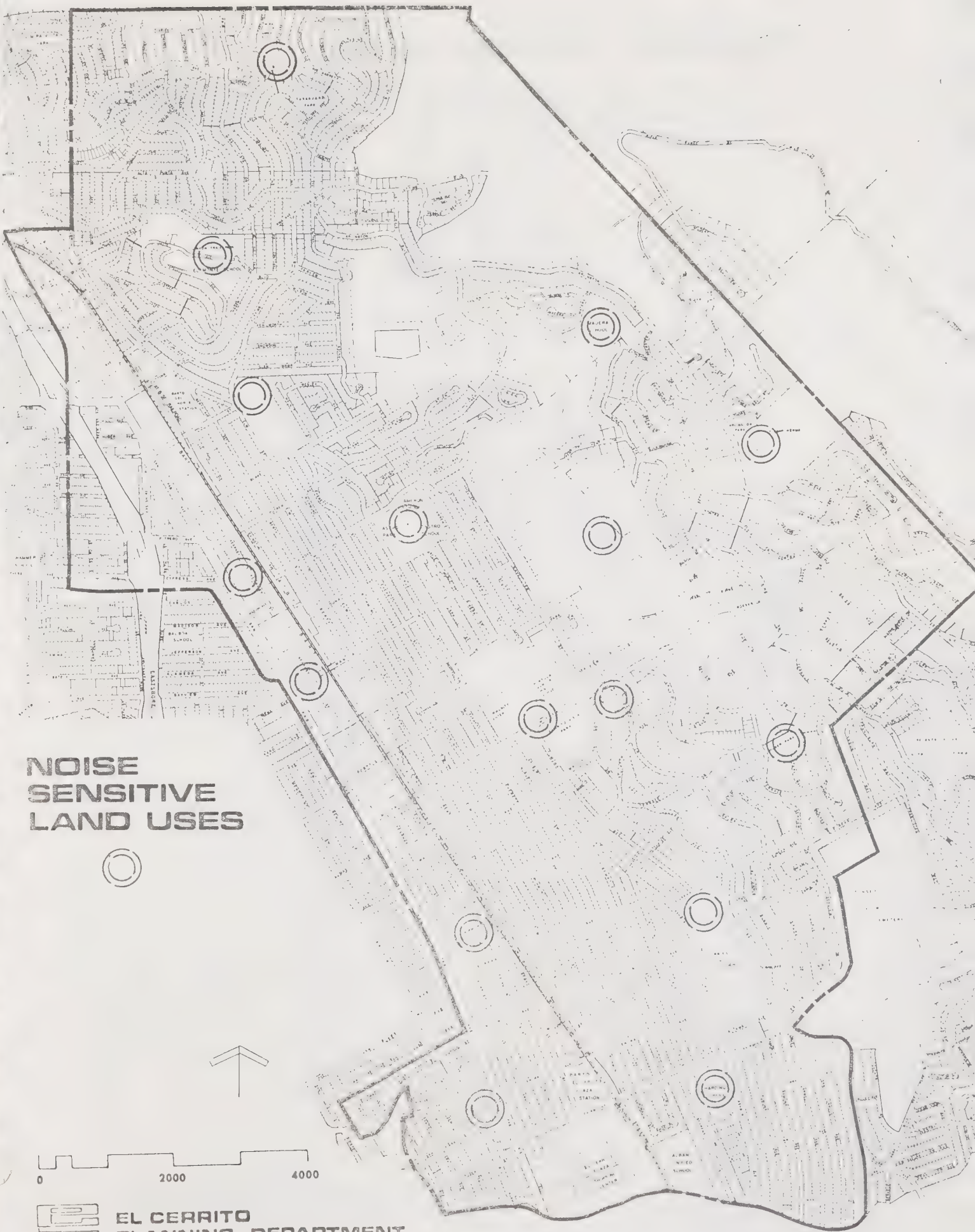
- A. DEFINITION. Noise is generally defined as sound which is not desirable. The noise continuum ranges from noise which is mildly irritating to that which interferes with speech and, finally, to noise which is physiologically destructive and causes loss of hearing.
- B. MEASUREMENT. Sound is measured on an exponential decibel scale. On the decibel scale an increase in ten decibels represents an increase of ten times the intensity of the sound being measured. The human ear, however, perceives only double the sound intensity for each ten decibel increase.

Other characteristics of noise which must also be taken into consideration in noise measurement are: (1) the time of day the noise occurs, (2) the duration of the individual noise disturbance, (3) the repetitiveness, steadiness or randomness of the noise disturbance, and (4) its relationship to other noise disturbances.

There are various ways in which the different characteristics mentioned above can be measured. The basic measurement is always some form of decibel scale. To account for different characteristics of noise and for such things as the time of day or night when the noise occurs, there are a number of other scales which make adjustments to the basic decibel scale. The three most commonly used scales are described as follows: *

1. Percentile measurements, L_n , indicate the sound level which is exceeded for a stated percentage of time under consideration (the percentage of time is indicated by the n value, for example, L_{10}). Such percentile measurements are relatively easy to calculate. However, they seem to be better adapted to relatively steady noise situations like freeways rather than airports or rapid transit lines which are characterized by widely separated individual noise events.
2. Community Noise Equivalent Noise Level, CNEL, is a measure of the average sound levels for a 24-hour period which is weighted to assign greater importance to sound occurring during the evening (7:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.) and even greater importance to sound during the night period (10:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M.) This weighting is justified on the grounds that noise during these periods is more disturbing than daytime sounds. This system is especially well adapted for assessment of airport noise, however, it is difficult and time consuming to measure.
3. Day-Night Average Sound Level, L_{dn} , is essentially the same as CNEL except that that there is only a penalty for sounds occurring during the night. This makes it somewhat easier to calculate. The Federal Environmental Protection Agency has recently recommended that L_{dn} be su
24-hour
noise. (see below for definition of L_{eq})
4. Energy Mean Equivalent Noise Level, L_{eq} , is essentially an average of all sounds occurring during a time period. Its value is that of a steady-state sound which would produce the same energy during that period. As such, it reflects all the loud and quiet sounds which occur. Unfortunately, it is fairly difficult to calculate.

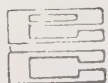
* Definitions from the Richmond Noise Element.



**NOISE
SENSITIVE
LAND USES**

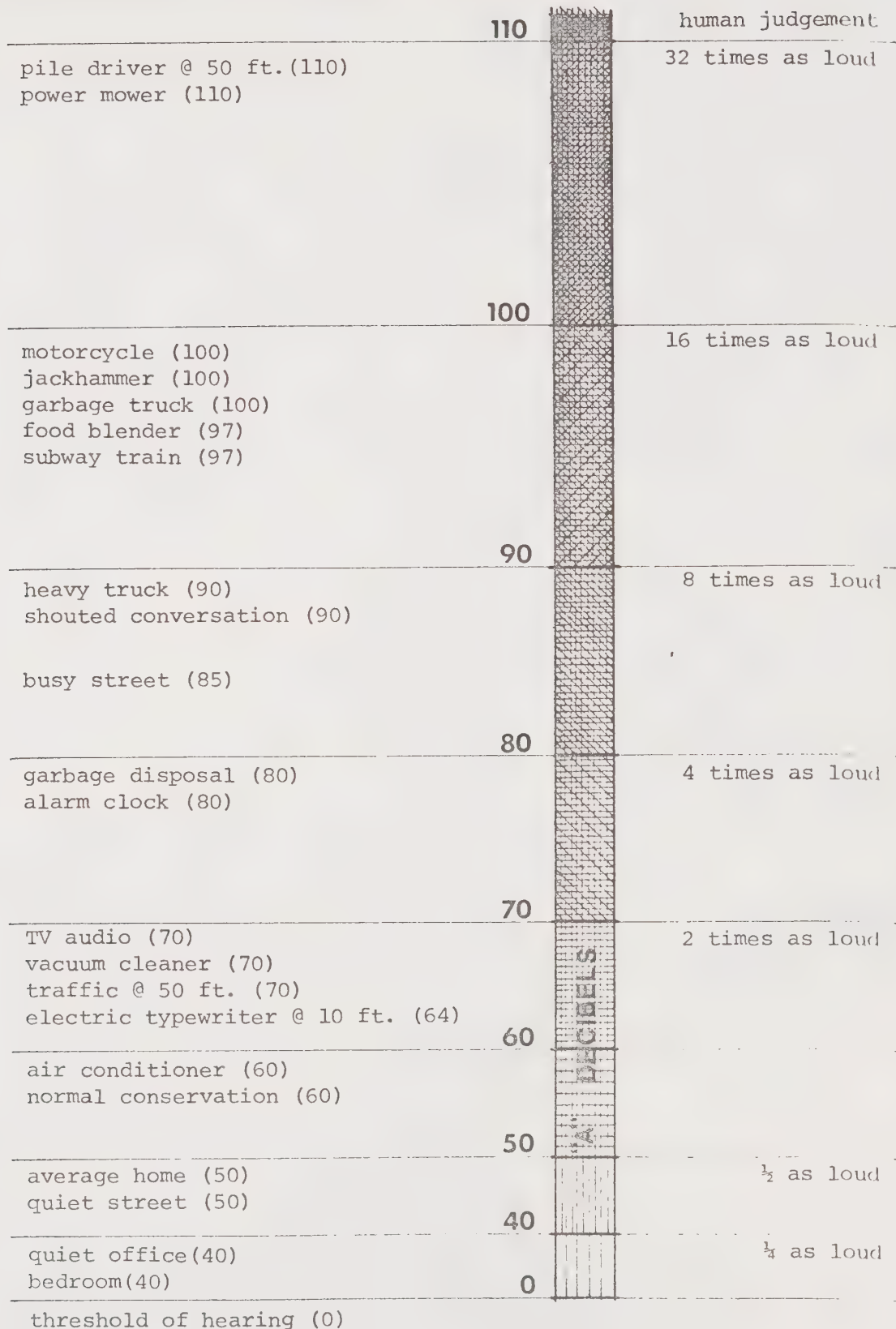


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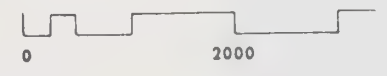
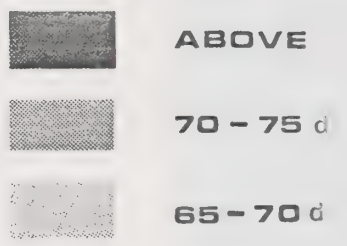
**EL CERRITO
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

COMMON SOUND LEVELS



Sources: Los Angeles Department of City Planning;
Christian Science Monitor News Service

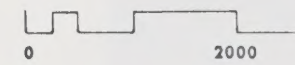
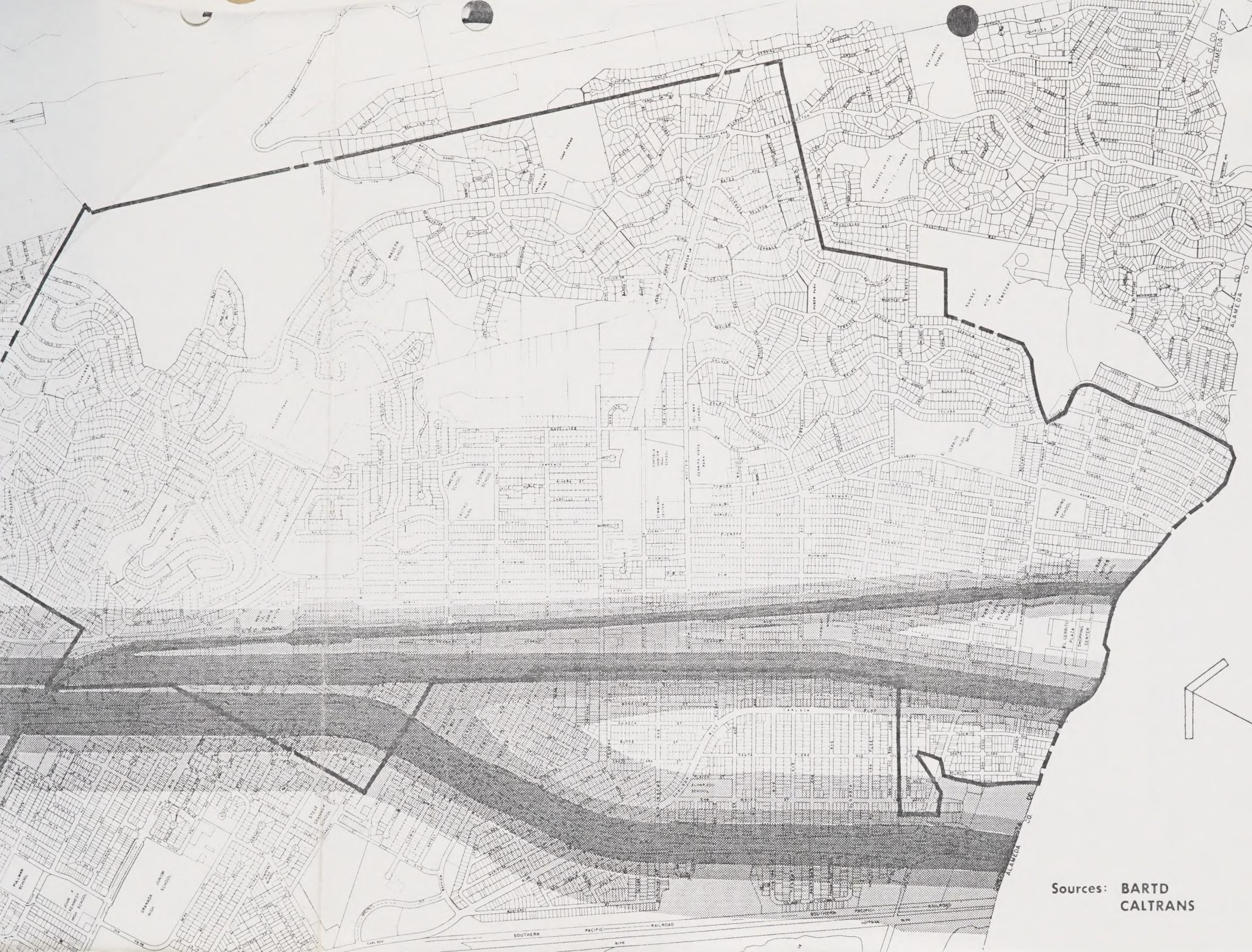
NOISE CONTROL



Sources: BARTD
CALTRANS

NOI CONT PROJECT

- ABC
- 70
- 65



Sources: BARTD
CALTRANS



APPENDIX H: FACTORS OF FIRE HAZARD

The following factors relate to the severity of fire hazard in a particular area or on a particular property. The degree of fire hazard can be judged by the presence of one or more of these factors:

- A. TOPOGRAPHY. Certain geographical surface features such as developed, grass and brush covered slopes tend to present the possibility of a severe, often difficult to control fire, should one occur. This is not only because access to fight the fire may be poor, but the steep slopes themselves promote fire spread. Fire travels much faster uphill than down. The fire generates winds of its own that propel it in its course increasing the effects of convective and radiant heat in drying out and heating fuels lying ahead of the fire front; increasing flame length and decreasing flame angle to fuels lying ahead. Thus, structures on ridges above dense vegetation are particularly susceptible to fire.
- B. VEGETATION. The presence of heavy or dense growths of natural brush and grasses pose a great fire hazard. When fire occurs in these areas, a high yield of heat energy is given off producing a fire of great intensity. In addition, burning fire brands may be carried by convective currents some distance from the point of origin, therefore, increasing the possibility of fire spread.
- C. ACCESSIBILITY. The presence of narrow, curvilinear, dead-end streets, cul-de-sacs, and steep street grades often pose an obstacle to effective fire fighting accessibility.
- D. WEATHER. Both winds and periods of low humidity are important factors in fire protection and fire safety. In period of low humidity, moisture content in natural and manmade fuels is reduced, hence, fire can be started more easily, and once started, burns much faster. Furthermore, wind velocity can influence fire spread and make fire containment much more difficult.
- E. FUEL LOADING. Fuel loading, or fire loading, is the amount of combustible material in a building subject to fire. This combustible material includes the combustible structural elements of the building and the combustible contents. Fuel loading influences the rapidity of combustion, once a fire is started, and the duration and intensity of the fire.
- F. EXPOSURE. Exposure relates to the relative proximity of structure or the physical location of structures in relation to each other which would increase the hazard of ignition of a building or its contents from fire originating in an adjoining building.
- G. PRIVATE FIRE PROTECTION FACILITIES. This factor relates to the degree or extent to which properties have been provided with fire protection devices and systems such as fire hydrants, automatic fire sprinkler systems and fire alarm detection and warning devices owned and installed by the owners of properties to reduce the risk of a fire extending beyond its place of origin.



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